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THE LATE SHAH OF PERSIA.

A T R A N D O M.

BY L. F. AUSTIN.

"We'll c'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see."

I am a good deal disturbed by the growing devotion of some editors to the bicycle. They seem to find in it an uncanny exhilaration; they mount it at ghostly hours, and speed through the night like Mercury, disseminating the first edition. One editorial friend of mine comes to his work with a cheerful account of a "spill" he has had on the way. He might have broken his neck, but that possibility does not trouble him; it gives him a keener zest for the joy of life; not his nerves, but mine, are racked by the danger. I go about with my head full of sympathetic phrases which may be suitable for an obituary notice. I see a long procession of mourning bicycles following him to the cemetery. I hear a salvo of bells—those irritating bicycle-bells—rung over his grave. And as he glides away in the dawn to his Belgravian home, I muse upon appropriate head-stones for the eloquent article which shall set forth his virtues and accomplishments, and his tragic fate at the hands of a deaf old apple-woman, whose solid proportions ended his career near Buckingham Palace in the flower of his early middle-age.

I wonder, by the way, that the apple-women have not been seized by the brilliant idea which came to the shrewd old lady in Maupassant's story. A gentleman of unblemished pedigree but straitened means came into a small legacy. He determined to spend it by hiring a horse for himself and a carriage for his wife and child, and to revel for one day in the splendour which properly belonged to his lineage. All went well till he desecrated an old woman in the middle of the road. She was deaf or lame, or she wanted to show Monsieur that, although he was mounted on a curvetting steed, she had as much right to the middle of the road as he had; at any rate, she was knocked down by his horse and taken to the hospital. The doctors were puzzled, for, although there was no external sign of injury, the patient seemed to suffer acutely when any attempt was made to examine her. She rent the air with piercing shrieks. At meal-times her appetite was excellent; she slept well; her spirits were good—until the doctor came his usual round, and then she was in great pain. This went on for weeks, the unfortunate horseman paying the hospital expenses, and the patient shrieking with agony whenever it was suggested that she should be removed to her home. At last, Monsieur came to the desperate conclusion that it was less expensive to lodge her under his own roof; so there she remained for the rest of her natural life, still suffering at intervals from the inexplicable injury. I tell this story as a warning to the editorial cyclist that he may find an apple-woman quartered upon him in the same way.

But, bless you, he pays no heed. Life for him is reduced to its simplest elements. There is marrying and giving in marriage; there is cycling and the buying of cycles; and little else happens in this world. The only complication arises when your cyclist chances also to be an angler, a golfer, and a crack billiard-player. My editorial friend, in whom these graces are conjoined, criticises the pedalling of a Ministry, gloats over the "bunkers" of his enemies, and, when I suggest that his favourite statesman is too "pushful," retorts with an eloquent defence of the "push-stroke." Add to all this the conviction that to ride the whirlwind and direct the storm is a trivial achievement compared with cycling and the stimulating "spill," and you have nothing less than an entirely new field of psychology. Love, ambition, avarice, are worn-out passions; the girdle which Puck put round the earth in forty minutes is eclipsed by the pneumatic tyre; when you become a cyclist you throw off the old Adam; there is no freemasonry like the instinctive affinity of cyclists, no touch of nature like the kinship of "spilling." Cycling is the re-creation of the social system; and already I feel myself a fossil plodding heavily along the pavement of life, morbidly conning obituary notices for the gay, translated creatures who flit past me on wheels.

I sympathise with the novelist who was mistaken by a reviewer for a woman because his Christian name is Francis. The reviewer was thinking of Frances, and he appears to have based various hasty assumptions on this confusion between "e" and "i." It would be better for the critical tribe not to bother their heads about the sex of a romancer. The worst illustration of this impertinent curiosity is Lady Eastlake's famous review of "Jane Eyre" in the *Quarterly*. That genial critic surmised that the author was a woman of immoral character, and I have lately seen this insinuation palliated on the ground that fifty years ago a book like "Jane Eyre," was a great shock to educated persons. I believe there are still educated persons who write you down as an atheist if you reject their particular "doxy," but I trust

they are not permitted to review books. Of course, the critic will say that the sex of the author is sometimes an important element in the structure of a novel. There is a masculine view of life, and there is a feminine view. This may be most true; but, as there are strange wild-fowl abroad, women who write masculine books, and literary men who are radically effeminate, it behoves the reviewer to be wary with Francis. Do not impute to him a petticoat, even though that garment seem to flutter in his pages.

Even more interesting is the millionaire who tries to chasten his abundance with the sentiment of poverty. Mr. Andrew Carnegie, master of millions, is always writing books about democratic ideals and the cardinal virtues. He seems to imagine that a rich man can get through the eye of a needle with the help of a publisher. He apostrophises the cottager, and says, "O my brother, how much happier is your lot than mine! How often, as you mend a hole in the roof, do you thank your stars that you are not like me, burdened with the cares of wealth, crushed by plate, dividends, and a balance at the bank that never grows less!" It is a sorry plight; but he should take courage. Why not try poverty for a year or two, instead of rhapsodising about it? I will take his dividends, and hand over to him this page and its emoluments, on condition that we shall resume our original functions when I am tired of his money. Probably I should find myself after a while preaching on the forlorn state of the millionaire, and exhorting the indigent not to be puffed up by their superior station.

We all have our fits of æsthetic histrionics. I find in the *New York Critic* a letter from an American playgoer who wonders that cultivated people in that city should be "frankly delighted with such a crude form of amusement" as Mr. Albert Chevalier's "coster" minstrelsy. The "coster," says this authority, is a man of primitive and even ferocious habits, whose sentiment is not romantic. Well, "The Coster's Serenade" must have puzzled any actual wearer of the "pearlies" who may have patronised Mr. Chevalier's entertainment; but a protest against sentimentality comes oddly from a country which has produced such idyllic heroes and heroines as Mr. Bret Harte's "Outcasts of Poker Flat." Mr. Chevalier's "coster" is not a whit more idealised than Jack Hamlyn. The habit of sentimentalising is so deeply ingrained in our race that the American who objects to it lays himself open to Mr. Brander Matthews's indictment of humorists who have no sense of humour. When Mark Twain took offence at Paul Bourget's philosophical criticism of American society, and retorted with a bitter attack on French morality, he illustrated Mr. Brander Matthews's paradox. This is what happens to the patriotic humorist when he takes umbrage at the foreigner.

The correspondent of the *Critic* is in a similar case, for he shows that his objection is not so much to the "coster" as to the American popularity of an imported comedian. There are half-a-dozen native performers who could surpass Mr. Chevalier in his own line, "if they were masters of the Cockney dialect." That accomplishment is all the more momentous because the Cockney dialect "is becoming more marked in the speech of Londoners year by year; and it is likely that men who felt at home in London a dozen years ago would find themselves puzzled now by Chevalier's pronunciation of certain vowels." You see to what an unfair advantage the American comedian is exposed. He masters the Cockney dialect in 1896; but in 1897 Mr. Chevalier visits New York again, with a pronunciation which makes the American artist's imitation quite obsolete. The Cockney dialect on the American stage ought to be immutable, like the Declaration of Independence. And why is it "becoming more marked in the speech of Londoners"? Why do we notice in drawing-rooms a growing tendency of dainty hostesses to say "gyne" instead of "game"? Why do our public orators propose the health of the "Lydies"? It is a serious matter, for Londoners are evidently unconscious of this growing Cockneyfication of their speech.

I have received a pathetic letter from a member of the Committee of the Society for the Suppression of Street Noises. He fears that some recent remarks in this page indicate sympathy on my part with the nuisances which he and his colleagues are seeking to destroy. There is not a tympanum in London which is more sensitive to noise than mine; but what I ventured to point out to the S.S.S.N. was that their crusade is a forlorn hope. My correspondent sends me a digest of foreign statutes. In the town of Bloomington, U.S.A., "no beating of drums or playing of any instrument is allowed." Does he propose to put down the military bands? "We do not intend to take up the question of church bells at all." Why not? Bells of all kinds are to many people worse than organs. You cannot suppress street noises and leave the belfry alone. In a word, you cannot make the multifarious sounds of London as soothing as the insect's drowsy hum.

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The reports of Mr. G. R. Fearby, M.E., and Mr. Hamilton Fisher, M.E., accompany the prospectus. "Perth, W.A., December 2, 1895.

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"I have perused the Reports on the 'Golden Rhine' Mine made by Mr. Fearby, M.E., and Mr. Hamilton Fisher, M.E., and my own recent inspection of the Property enables me now to corroborate those Reports in every respect. (Signed) L. R. MENZIE, M.E."

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Prospectuses and Forms of Application may be obtained from the Bankers, Brokers, Solicitors, and at the Offices of the Company.

London, May 4, 1896.

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THE BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

Edited by ALFRED E. T. WATSON ("Rapiet").

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| II. LIGHT INFANTRY OF THE HUNTING FIELD. By J. F. SULLIVAN. Illustrated by the Author. | VII. ELEPHANT-HUNTING IN NEPAL. By COLONEL H. WYLIE, C.S.I. Illustrated from Photographs. |
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May 6, 1896.

Signature.....

THE SHAHS OF PERSIA.

Not since the dagger of an Anarchist laid Sadi Carnot low has the head of any State perished by the hand of a murderer. The assassination of the Shah, however, has been less of a shock to the world, as the whole history of Persia shows but few of her rulers have died peacefully in their beds. Persia was conquered by the Turcomans in 1468. They were expelled by the Shiites, who established the Sophi dynasty under Ismail I. in 1501, when the Shahs began to reign. Assassinations were frequent in those days. Nadir Shah, that great soldier who conquered India in 1739, was murdered by a Persian officer on the plains of Sultan Maidan in 1747. In 1794 Aga Mahommed, a monster of cruelty and ingratitude, obtained the power, and founded the present Turcoman dynasty. He, too, was assassinated, almost exactly a century ago, in 1797.

Persia, perhaps, was never so prosperous as during the long reign of Abbas the Great—that is, from 1585 to 1628. After his death the royal princes, by the shortsighted and suspicious policy of their fathers, were confined in the harem instead of being brought up as soldiers, with the natural result of throwing Persia into the hands of a succession of effeminate and cruel tyrants. Abbas the Great was succeeded by his grandson, Shah Sophi, a cruel drunkard, who died in 1641. Shah Sophi's son and successor, Abbas II., was an enlightened potentate. When only sixteen he retook Kandahar from the Great Mogul, conducting the campaign in person. He gave every encouragement to Christian merchants and artificers to settle in Persia. When urged to persecute the unbelievers, he said, "It is for God, not for me, to judge



FUTTEH ALI SHAH (1798-1834).

Persia, and took Isfahan, which he entered in triumph, bringing Shah Husain as a captive in his train. After perpetrating inconceivable cruelties, Mahmoud the Usurper died in 1725, and his successor, Ashraf, was defeated by Nadir, a robber chief, who fought on behalf of Shah Husain's son, the young Támasp II. Nadir finally routed the Afghans in January, 1730, but his ambition was greater than his loyalty, and he dethroned his master in 1732, setting up Támasp's infant son as nominal Shah. In 1736, however, Nadir threw off his last pretence, and was himself proclaimed Shah. Thus ended the Sophi dynasty.

Kureem Khan, who reigned from 1753 to 1779, was a chief of the Zand tribe. He completely defeated Azwad Khan, the Afghan governor of Azerbaijan, but it was not till 1760 that he found himself in possession of the whole of Persia, with the exceptions of Georgia and Khorassan. He was an excellent monarch, and during his reign the people "passed their leisure hours in the society of moon-faced damsels, the sparkling goblet circulated, and love and pleasure reigned in every breast." The memory of Kureem Khan is still revered by the Persians.

Futteh Ali Shah reigned from 1798 to 1834. He was such a coward that one or two shots from a small field-piece would make him fall off his horse in a swoon of terror. He shut up his uncle in a room, and left him to die of starvation, although he had sworn not to hurt him.

He had a wasp-like waist, and the finest beard in the East. He had one hundred and fifty sons and twenty daughters.

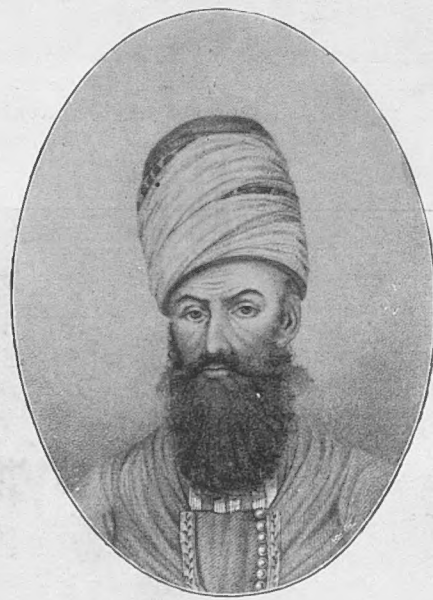
The late Shah, Nasr-ed-Din, was born on Monday, 6 Safar, A.H. 1247, which, being interpreted, means July 17-18, 1831. He was the eldest son of Muhammed Shah, and succeeded to the throne at the death of



ABBAS II. (1641-1666).



TÁMASP II. (1729-1732).



KUREEM KHAN (1753-1779).

of men's consciences, and I will never interfere with what belongs to the tribunal of the Great Creator and Lord of the Universe." He died in 1666, and is buried with his father in a beautiful mosque at Kum, near the shrine of the holy Fatima. Persia did not prosper under the immediate successors of Abbas II. The Afghans under Mahmoud invaded

his father in 1848. He visited England in 1873, and again in 1889. He had intended to pay another visit to Europe in about two years, for he was one of the few Eastern potentates who really seemed to enjoy the piquant contrast afforded by Western modes of life. This taste of his, however, did not result, as had been expected, in the opening up of Persia.

"THE NEW BABY," AT THE ROYALTY THEATRE.

Photographs by Blomfield, Hastings.



FAITH (MISS IRENE VANBRUGH).

It is astonishing that any manager should have considered "The New Baby" a play to be produced in London, or, in fact, anywhere in these islands. One cannot help wondering whether or no the Censor hinted to Mr. Bouchier that it is not in the best possible taste to make fun out of the supposed inability of the two sweethearts in the play to get married because they are brother and sister. There have been outcries at the serious treatment of such a theme by Wagner in "Die Walkyrie," and suggestion of it in "Ghosts" horrified almost everybody. It is difficult, then, to imagine that Mr. Bouchier should escape unblamed when employing it in a mere farce. Frankly speaking, even if I had found "The New Baby" exceedingly funny, I should have felt it a duty to protest; therefore, since upon the whole it was dull, and at times actually dreary, I venture, for once in a way, to feel indignant. The difference between French and German farce in theory is in favour of the German, which, as a rule, seems rather to rely on humour than wit, on character than on intrigue. The result is that a feeble German play is worse than a bad French farce, for the wit often redeems even the clumsiest piece from Paris. Now, it would be difficult to pretend that there was a witty line in "The New Baby," the chief humour of which seemed to consist in an elaborate study of the character of a woman who, while in some aspects an exceedingly jealous wife, insists upon adopting an antenuptial child of her husband. I am inclined to think that there was some ingenuity in the drawing of the woman's part, and certainly there is very much cleverness in Miss Alice Mansfield's handling of it. In Mr. Charles Troode we have a very promising young actor. No doubt he made a great mistake in not giving a comic touch to his horror and grief when he suspects the character of his mother, and believes that her frailty is an obstacle to his happiness; but he actually shows considerable power and skill in displaying the emotions that the situation, if in serious theatrical life, would have called for. Miss Irene Vanbrugh is quite charming. It would be difficult to name an *ingénue* on the stage who has a lighter and more pleasing style. As for Mr. Bouchier, one of the most uneven of actors, I should say that he seemed amateurish. It is very curious that a player who, in some difficult parts, has given masterly performances should, in pure farce, have such a heavy hand and such a lack of definition. Mr. Blakeley absolutely out-Blakeleyed himself.



PASCOE (MISS LILIAN MILLWARD), MRS. WALKER (MISS MANSFIELD), AND COLONEL WALKER (MR. BOURCHIER).



MRS. WALKER, MRS. GOMEZ (MISS KATHARINE STEWART), AND THE COLONEL.



MRS. WALKER, MRS. GOMEZ, AND THE COLONEL.



HARRY (MR. TROODE), THE COMMODORE (MR. BLAKELEY), AND HIS WIFE (MRS. DE SOLLÁ).

"THE NEW BABY," AT THE ROYALTY THEATRE.

Photographs by Blomfield, Hastings.



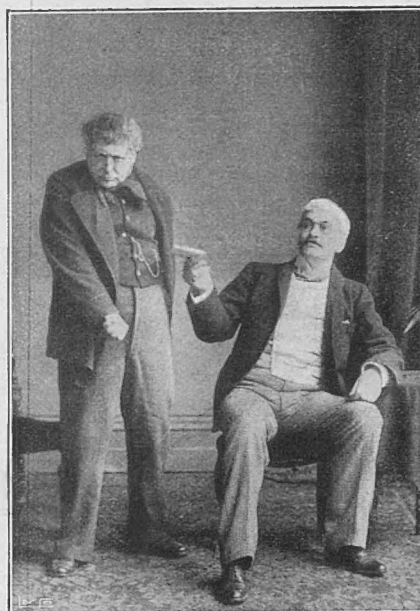
FAITH, HER MOTHER, AND HER LOVER.



THE COMMODORE.



MRS. WALKER AND HARRY.



THE COMMODORE AND THE COLONEL.



MRS. GOMEZ.



THE COMMODORE AND THE COLONEL.



GOMEZ (MR. ELLIOT) AND THE COMMODORE.



MRS. VAN GÜTT.



HARRY AND FAITH.

SMALL TALK.

The Queen is home once more, all the better for her stay abroad. The Duke and Duchess of York will be the guests of Lord Feversham when they visit the County Agricultural Show at York. Lord Lonsdale is visiting the Kaiser.

The children of the Hon. James Lowther are making a short stay in Madeira. The weather there is beautiful at present, and the average number of English visitors have gone into temporary quarters in Funchal and its immediate vicinity.

This week I can but record the opening of the Royal Academy to the public on Monday, and therefore delay discussing the details of the show until next week. Let me deliberately say, however, that a quiet inspection proves that the general average excellence of the exhibition is considerably higher than it has been of recent years. Curiously enough, this is the first occasion I remember in which the Academy shows, as its characteristic qualities, movement and intention. There is a distinctly upward tendency observable in the works of the great majority of artists who have sent in work this year. Even the older men have not contented themselves with pursuing

three wheels for two, and, on his Marriott and Cooper Humber, can now cut out the pace with the best of his retinue. The result of this viceregal enthusiasm in the matter of the cycle has made Melbourne society absolutely slaves to the wheel.

Lord Brassey's new-found enthusiasm for the wheel seems to have somewhat cooled his ardour for the briny, and the famous yacht *Sunbeam* lies in Hobson's Bay, a monument of inattention for the time being. It is small wonder that the cycling craze has been so readily and generally taken up by the Melbourne people, for their city, with its fine, broad, straight, rectangular streets, laid with miles upon miles of nicely asphalted tramway tracks, smooth as a racing-path, is, perhaps, one of the best in the world for a thorough enjoyment of the pastime. The photograph presented herewith shows a sight that is to be witnessed any day at Melbourne Government House—a viceregal cycling party.

Lady Arthur Hill, the wife of Lord Arthur Hill, Comptroller of the Queen's Household, whose name has lately been mentioned a good deal in connection with the Governorship of Jamaica, is a somewhat rare person—a composer who objects to being interviewed. Her ladyship lives in a charming house in Eaton Square, which is furnished with a taste and knowledge that does great credit to somebody. She is one of

Hon. R. Carrington. Capt. F. Thomas. Mrs. Carrington.

Hon. Mrs. Captain Thomas. Wallington.

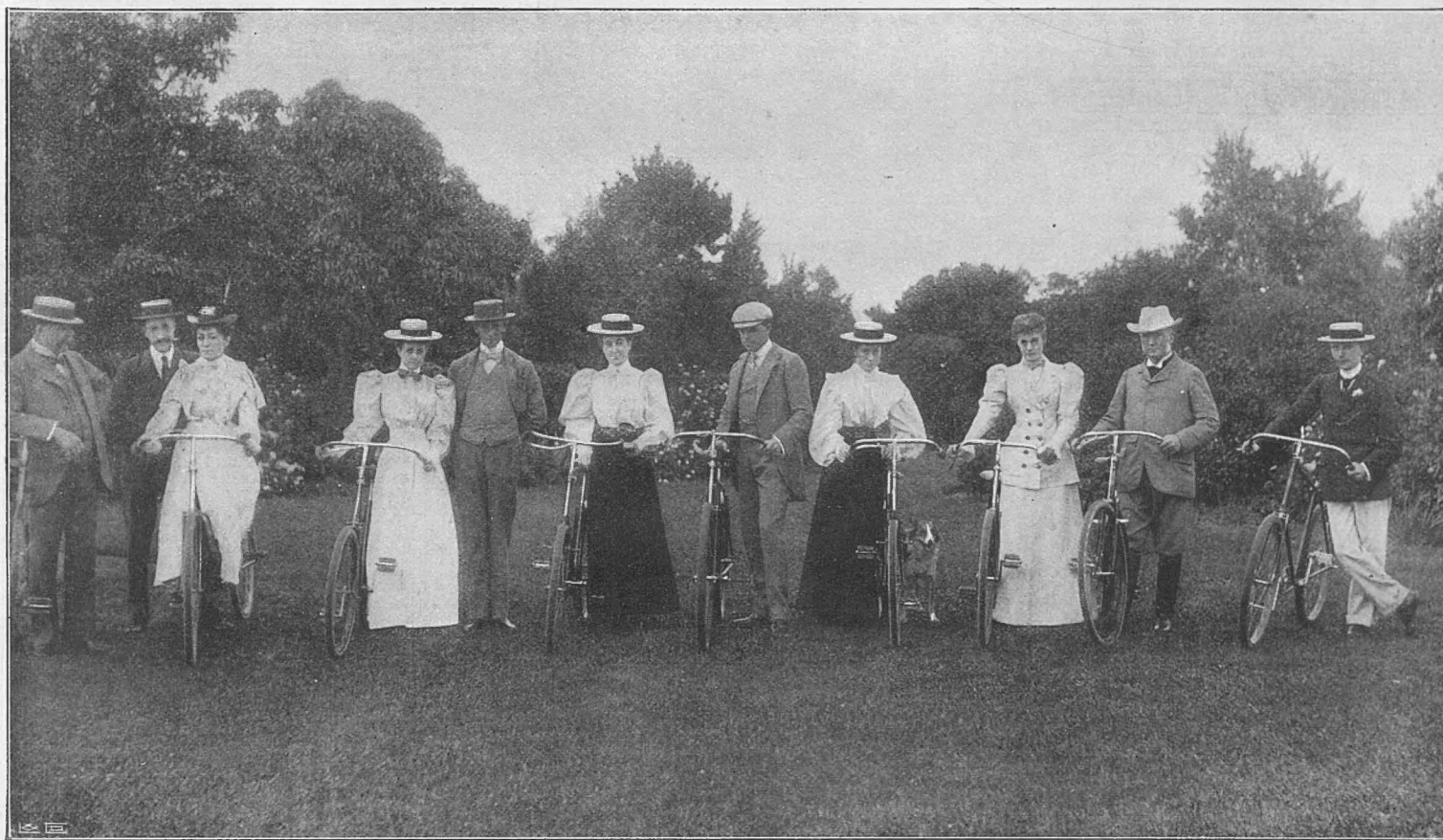
Hon. Miss Brand.

Earl of Shaftesbury.

Hon. Miss Brand.

Lady Brassey. Lord Brassey.

Capt. S. Stanley.



SOCIETY ON WHEELS IN AUSTRALIA.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY VANDYK, MELBOURNE.

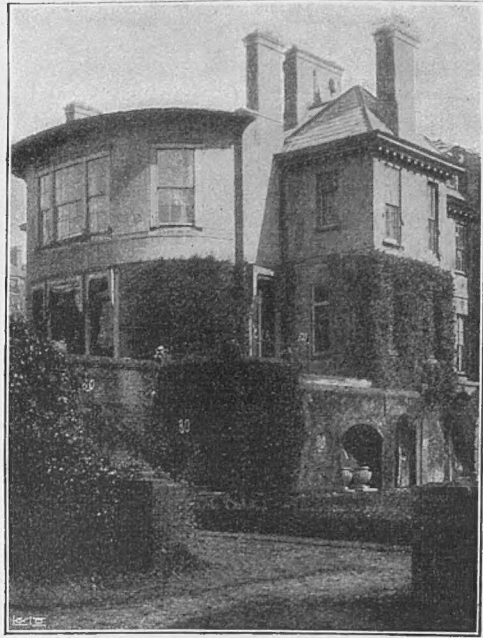
their ancient and customary pathways. Here is Mr. Dicksee with one passage of exquisite painting of mother-of-pearl; Mr. Abbey's "Richard III." is, in the truest sense of the term, a great historical work; Mr. Stott of Oldham sends two singularly beautiful sea passages; the President is well to the fore; Lord Leighton, in his best vein, is represented by a single picture; there are two fine Sargents, and some not quite so fine; the Newlyn and St. Ives schools are in very great prominence; there is a good deal of youth evident, and a certain amount of veteran obstinacy; but, take it all in all, we will pronounce the Academy of 1896 as exceptionally attractive and meritorious.

There is now scarcely an occupant of the half-dozen Government Houses in Australia who does not cycle. Most of the Governors and their families are comparatively recent arrivals, and they have taken the cycling infection with them from England. Lord and Lady Brassey were the first to lead the way with their iron steeds, and then Sir Thomas and Lady Fowell-Buxton, of South Australia, Viscount and Viscountess Hampden, of New South Wales, Lord Lamington, of Queensland, and Sir Gerard and Lady Smith, of Western Australia, took up the running, and to-day we have a united Australian Viceregalty given over enthusiastically to the worship of the pneumatic wheel. Lord Brassey, as became a sedate and sober-minded statesman of his character, at first cast in his lot with the steady-going triecyle, but, finding that Lady Brassey, the Hon. Mrs. Freeman Thomas (his daughter), the Earl of Shaftesbury, Lord Richard Nevill, and others of his suite, mounted on the more sprightly bicycle, were apt to make the speed too warm for him on runs round the Melbourne suburbs, he quickly discarded

the comparatively few English composers of the day who has made anything substantial out of a single composition. "In the Gloaming," which was written by her nineteen years ago, has produced in royalties what to many people would be quite a fortune. In fact, in one year alone the composer reaped one thousand pounds from it. It seems that the story that appeared in some of the daily papers concerning the circumstances under which the song was written is utterly untrue.

As might have been expected, Lady Arthur Hill has not been so fortunate as to write any other song of such popularity. She has been a fairly prolific composer, and has had the advantage of poetry written for her by the late Mrs. Alexander, wife of the present Primate of Ireland. Her ladyship takes great interest in politics, and has even gone so far as to write political songs. One of them, "For Union and for Queen," made a great noise when it was sung in the Albert Hall by a chorus of ten thousand delegates who came over from Ireland to protest against Home Rule. "The Good Old Cause" has frequently been sung at political meetings, and "Our Volunteers" has been successfully arranged as a march for military bands. In addition to this, her ladyship has taken an interest in the stage, and when "On 'Change" was produced in London in 1886, an operetta written by her, called "A Lost Husband," was played in front of it for over six weeks. Moreover, another operetta by her, called "A Fairy Girl," was twice given at the Savoy Theatre for the benefit of the Fund for Distressed Irish Ladies. Her ladyship has helped her husband no little by using her gifts as musician and singer in his political campaigns, and in this has been assisted by her daughter, who shares her mother's talents.

Hampstead is slowly vanishing. Rosslyn House, an old mansion with interesting and historical associations, is now being demolished. It was originally called "Shelford Lodge," and dates back almost to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. At that time, and long after, it stood alone, amid the fields, commanding a vast view of the country round—of



ROSSLYN HOUSE, HAMPSTEAD.

Epping Forest, over Highbury, on the one hand, and of the Surrey hills on the other; of much of London, and of the vale of the Thames, upwards, far beyond Richmond, and of the town of Windsor. Lord Rosslyn purchased it in 1791, and considerably altered it, adding a large oval room on the ground floor, with another of the same dimensions over it. The plan of the house was what the French call a *maison* or *château à quatre tourelles*, four square, with a high Mansard roof in the centre, and a square turret at each corner with a pyramidal roof. This the photograph shows on the right-hand side, and Lord Rosslyn's additions on

the left. The grand avenue of trees leading up to the house, having been gradually thinned by decay and storms, is being cut down; and the beautiful gardens which, up to thirty years ago, surrounded the house have been gradually sacrificed for the erection of suburban villas. Apropos of the article on the House of Commons Library in this issue, I may say that Mr. Gladstone has been seen, even in recent years, reading in those rooms. What library, indeed, is there that would not attract a book-lover with his catholicity of taste? Sir William Harcourt visits it on rare occasions to look up some authority. As a rule, however, the great men send their secretaries. Books are allowed to be taken into the House. This is a practice which librarians do not encourage, but members are despots within the walls of Parliament. What they will they do, and no man dare hinder them—except the Whip. When a member writes a book, he is pretty sure to have it used against him in debate. Mr. Bryce's "American Commonwealth" was a godsend to Mr. Chamberlain, and at this moment the Irish Nationalists are studying the "History of the Eighteenth Century," by the junior member for Dublin University. Let Mr. Lecky the member beware of Mr. Lecky the historian.

The veteran impressionist painter, Camille Pissarro, is holding a very successful exhibition of recent pictures at the Durand-Ruel Gallery in Paris. I have just received the catalogue of his pictures, with which is published an interesting account of the artist's work by Arsène Alexandre, who is, I believe, the art critic of the *Figaro*. Camille Pissarro, who must now be nearing his eightieth year, came to England some three summers ago, took a studio by the riverside, and might have been seen in the neighbourhood of Kew Bridge working hard from morning till night. It was my pleasant privilege to spend an evening in his company and see some of his work. His enthusiasm and vitality are unimpaired by age, and the success of his later years has not made him give up an hour's

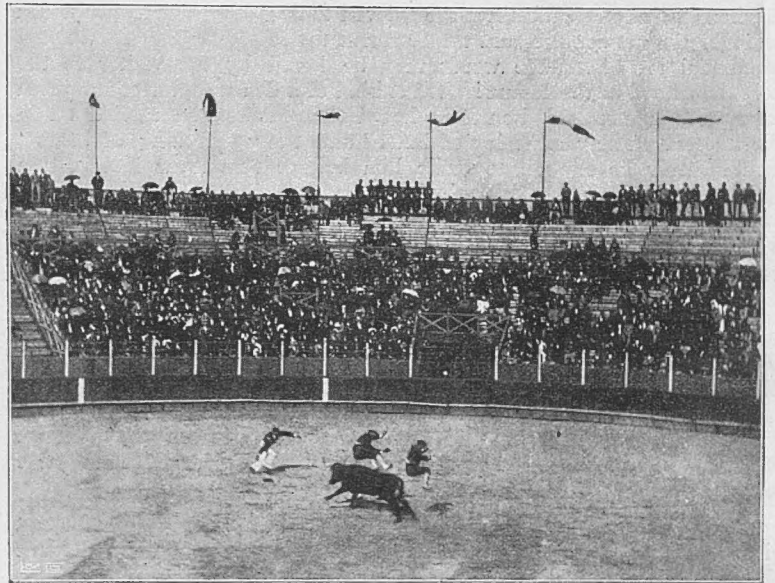


THE LODGE OF ROSSLYN HOUSE.

work. Already his pictures are increasing tremendously in market value, and some of his earlier canvases are fetching very much more than their weight in gold. The demand in Belgium and the United States has allowed very few to reach England. Of the few I am the happy possessor of one.

District Councils seem to manage their all-night sittings in a more comfortable spirit than the House of Commons. The District Council of Featherstone, Yorkshire, has lately spent two whole nights on the initial business of electing a chairman. Two members were proposed for this important office; each received six votes, and neither party would give way. But there was no display of ill-feeling or impatience, there was no struggle as to which side could hold out longest without food or sleep. On the contrary, refreshments were ordered in, and draughts, dominoes, and other amusements, and the Council sat smoking the "pipe of peace" in a friendly and amicable manner till half-past four on Friday morning, when they adjourned till Monday evening. The next sitting was prolonged in the same convivial way till Wednesday morning, and, with intervals for breakfast and dinner, was continued till the afternoon, when an arrangement was made by which both parties agreed to give up their respective candidates and to elect a third Councillor to the chair.

Most people will doubtless remember the riots that occurred at Bayonne in September through the edict suppressing bull-fighting in France. A correspondent sends me a note on a performance in the arena at Bayonne the other Sunday. It seems that, while the edict still holds good against what are called Spanish bull-fights, the Bayonnais are for the present permitted to witness the Courses Landais; that is, shows in



A BULL-FIGHT AT BAYONNE.

which appear both men and bulls, but no horses, and no weapons wherewith to torture the bulls. It was advertised far and wide that the Bayonne Saison Tauromachique was to open on Sunday with a "Grand Concours Landais," so, armed with my trusty camera, I arrived, secured a good seat, and waited, expecting at least some excitement. But I was doomed to disappointment. First, in marched ten men, *écarteurs* and *sauteurs*, gaily dressed in velvet and satin, and with brightly coloured handkerchiefs in their hands, no other weapon of attack or defence being permitted them. Very gay and handsome they looked, and they were certainly not wanting in agility. After the procession had passed round the arena, Bull No. 1 was led into the ring and allowed to disport himself, firmly held, however, by a long cord by Omer, his guardian. The *sauteurs* advanced and retreated, with due regard to personal safety, vaulting over the barriers whenever the enemy made a dash in their direction. Two of them, good jumpers, performed a pretty feat—jumping right over the bull's back as he dashed across the arena. This was done without the aid of any vaulting-poles, a rather unusual and certainly a very clever feat of agility. Bull No. 5 was of a warlike and aggressive disposition, for as one man, an *écarteur à la feinte*, whose business it was to annoy the bull and then slip aside as he approached, failed in his spring and rolled on the ground, the bull, tugging at his cord, gored him in the rear, seriously damaging his nether garments, and inflicting some slight damage on his person. The wounded hero was borne away amid the cheers of the crowd.

Fourteen bulls in all were let into the arena, their tormentors danced and jumped around them, and the beasts departed; all very pretty, doubtless, with the gay colours, and the blue sky overhead, but absolutely uninteresting as a bull-fight in the absence of all the horrors which went to make the excitements of a Spanish fight so thrilling. It may be, since long-established customs die slowly, and you cannot by act of law do away with the longing for a popular amusement in the minds of the common folk, that the authorities are wise to sanction this modified form of entertainment for the present, in the hope that of its own deadly dulness it will weary the people.

When the history of South African speculations comes to be written, I hope the historian will not overlook one curious result of the huge fortunes made. It is the intense popularity of the word "million." Next to possessing the sum indicated by the word, most men have a strange pleasure in repeating it. Apparently a peculiar fascination attaches to the sound. I meet men in all conditions of life who talk of "millions" as though the word left a delightful taste in the mouth. Now, every person whose wealth is great, yet unknown, is dubbed "millionaire." Cræsus is absolutely left out in the cold; nobody swears by him. Barnato has taken his place, and to adequately describe the effect his two great ventures have had upon the speculative public I can only parody a few words of the passage in Shakspeare's "King John," where Hubert is speaking to the King—

The stockbrokers and men round Capel Court
Do prophesy upon them dangerously:
Consols and Banks are common in their mouths,
And when they talk of them they shake their heads,
And whisper one another in the ear;
And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist;
Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.

There is no doubt that the Stock Exchange is depressed. I lunched with a member of the House on the occasion of the last Fancy-dress Ball at Covent Garden. At the same time last year he was as merry as a cricket, now he seemed as melancholy as an owl. Last year he was contributing to her Majesty's Revenue by the consumption of champagne and big cigars; now he talks about signing the pledge and consumes cigarettes. Before lunch was over I found that he had no real intention of reducing the Revenue by falling a victim to abstinence; in fact, he became more cheerful, and gave me to understand that he did not stand in fear of brokers of a species differing from his own. I rather fancy that the sudden fortunes made last year have demoralised a section of the Exchange, that some members are grieved to think that wealth now takes a longer time to acquire, and rather resent the state of things. What a wonderful lot of strange words may be heard by the visitor to the neighbourhood of the House! What kind of a den would a countryman imagine he had stumbled on if he heard the conversation carried on in the streets? The "cornering of bulls" and the "squeezing of bears" would surely be enough to make him believe that there had been a serious escape from the Zoological Society's Gardens. On the occasion of my visit I also heard references to "sharks" and "hawks," from which I gather that birds, beasts, and fishes are to be found in the precincts of the House.

Madame Sophie Menter, now perhaps our greatest pianist, is in fine form. Her success at the Philharmonic Society's concert was remarkable. There is such an air of ease about her playing, just as though the most difficult piece were but five-finger exercises. She has a delightful nonchalance, looking critically at her fingers when the orchestra was employed, and waiting till her turn came with apparent indifference. Every note was struck clearly, and was audible throughout even the *forte* efforts of the band.

A well-known firm of coach-builders, who will pardon me for not giving them bold advertisement, are making a victoria for President Krüger. The carriage is to be painted "Oom Paul's" favourite colour, which, it appears, is green. If only the President had accepted Mr. Chamberlain's invitation, he might have driven about London in this verdant vehicle.

Many artistic, musical, and literary folks will regret to learn that Mr. James Orrock, that popular member of the "Savages"—who has, by the way, recently (with the help of Sir James Linton) sat very hard on Mr. Sidney Colvin in the matter of the treatment of water-colour drawings at the British Museum—has met with a painful accident. Mr. Orrock has been shot in the eye. Luckily, however, the weapon levelled at him (I fear by a young lady) was a soda-water bottle, and the missile a cork. However, those who have experienced the unpleasant surprise that one sustains under such circumstances will not be astonished to hear that the erudite and jovial victim was confined to a dark room for some days. When I met him he had a patch over one optic, but was going on as well as could be expected. Mr. Orrock's friends will have the consolation of remembering that he can see as much with one eye as most folks can manage with a pair—perhaps a good deal more.

Mr. Lloyd Chandos, the rising young tenor of whom the Guildhall School of Music is naturally proud, has been booked to sing at the National Eisteddfod, which will be held next July at Llandudno.

Madame Patti will make her first appearance in London this season at a grand morning concert in the Albert Hall on Tuesday afternoon. The following artists will appear, in addition to Madame Patti:—Miss Ada Crossley, Mr. Edward Lloyd, Mr. Reginald Brophy, Mr. Alexander Tucker, Miss Isabel Hirschfeld, M. Jacques Jacobs, Miss Clara Eissler, and Mr. John Lemmoné.

Mr. John Parnell, whose books, MSS., pictures, engravings, china, and so forth, have during the last fortnight been offered for sale on his premises, Chichester House, Shepherd's Bush Green, is a little, stout, grey-haired man, who is truly versatile in his accomplishments. For instance, he has been in business, is a great English historical scholar, has done newspaper work, and has written novels, a three-act play, an operetta, essays, and many poems, comic, Parliamentary, national, and satirical. That he has been a prolific author is apparent from the fact that his works, published and unpublished, formed as many as a hundred and eleven

items in the literary catalogue of the Chichester House sale. This part of the auction Mr. John Parnell was announced to conduct himself.

A change is to be noted on the front page of the catalogue, issued by Mr. and Mrs. Tregaskis, that so regularly gladdens the hearts of "collectors." The old cut of "The Caxton Head" is replaced by an illustration representing the front of their shop in High Holborn, with the side view into New Turnstile.

Even the historic and picturesquely dingy precincts of Gray's Inn have been invaded by the bill-poster. A large advertisement hoarding now separates the north end of Fulwood's Rents (not so long since one of the worst slums in the neighbourhood) from the adjoining Field Court, just where a clearance has been made of some old houses, including the chambers until recently tenanted by Mr. Harold Cox.

I do not pretend that "A Night Out," at the Vaudeville, is a masterpiece, that it can be compared, for instance, with "Pink Dominoes" in construction, with "Divorçons" in wit or skill of character-drawing, or the Pinero farces in depth and subtlety of humour; but it is one of the merriest mad pieces seen for a long time, and certainly made me laugh till my waistcoat-buttons were in peril. I know that there are sour-minded people who would pull the play to pieces, and indulge in the old phrases about whitened sepulchres, about hardly veiled improprieties, and about *double entente*, which they would probably call *double entendre*; and I fancy that, if I had not been vastly amused, I might have been one of the number. Indeed, I sometimes suspect that I have not a trace of conscience, and am only indignant about the morals of the piece when it fails to amuse me. For a long time during the first act I did not expect that the play was going to be much out of the common. Indeed, until the last five minutes, there was nothing very funny save the curious love-scene between Miss Pattie Brown, who was delightful, and Mr. Aubrey Fitzgerald, whose acting as a curious, book-loving boy infected with love was really a remarkable performance. That last five minutes contained a very happy little idea in the exit of the guilty lover over the balcony to an accompaniment of music which suggested the ever-memorable "L'Enfant Prodigue." Mr. George Giddens' silent miming was very comic.

It really seems needless in the next act to have the business of his being made sick by his cigar; this seems playing it a little low down. And I should like to be indignant about the appearance of four young ladies in their night-dresses in the bedroom of the unhappy architect, who comes to study ghosts and gets nearly scared out of his wits. The effect, however, was so funny that it would be a pity to do any cutting. It is very wonderful that, after the thousand-and-one efforts to make fun out of the escapade of people who all go to a more or less disreputable hotel in the second act, and are raided by the police, anyone should have been clever enough to give a novel turn to the affair, but the authors and adapter have succeeded. The great merit of "A Night Out" lies in the second act, where, with remarkable ingenuity, farcical wickedness is caused to triumph over virtue, and vastly funny situations are produced. Mr. Sugden was exceedingly clever in this, and, indeed, all through. Mr. Wyes, one of our ablest character-actors, gave a most comic study of a jolly old notary. Miss Fanny Ward acted brightly, and the performance of Mrs. Edmund Phelps was sound, as is always the case with her. Really, "A Night Out" gave one a capital opportunity of exercising the laughing machinery, upon which, alas! lately there has been very little strain.

Mr. Arthur Bearn, a touring manager always on the *qui-vive* for London successes, has secured provincial rights in "The Star of India," and announces that he will commence his tour in the autumn with the original scenery, properties, and dresses from the Princess's. No doubt the new Sims-Shirley drama will draw splendid business in the country.

Mr. George Edwardes had got together a capital company for the provincial production of perhaps the best of recent musical comedies, "The Clergyman's Daughter," brought out with emphatic success at Mr. Charles Dornton's theatre, the Birmingham Royal. To begin with, in the title-rôle there was charming Miss Kate Cutler as May, whose father, the Rev. Arthur Mildreth, was impersonated by Mr. Charles Riley. That versatile vocal comedian (and eke ventriloquist of renown), Mr. John Le Hay, seems to have made a palpable hit as a Jewish stock-jobber, who, for business purposes, passes as a Scotsman; another good comedian, Mr. Martin Adeson, appeared as a South African financier, and other clever people in the cast were Mr. Cairns James, winsome Miss Marie Montrose, and Miss Ada Willoughby, who has latterly made herself a tremendous favourite in pantomime.

"Iolanthe" is immortal. Six performances have just been given of Gilbert and Sullivan's charming fantasy by the Sunderland Amateur Operatic Society in the local Theatre Royal. It is a very enterprising body of players. Although established but two and a-half years ago, the Society has produced four of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas and one of Planquette's. In this way, not only has operatic music of the best kind been encouraged on Wearside, but the charities of the town have benefited very considerably. The opera was produced with great ability and care. The following were the chief performers: The Lord Chancellor, Mr. G. Clark junior; Earl of Mountararat, Mr. Sol. Isaacs; Earl Tolloler, Mr. R. Haswell; Private Willis, Mr. A. M. Rayson; Strephon, Mr. E. T. Shields; Queen of the Fairies, Miss Eva Brown; Iolanthe, Miss Amy Möller; Celia, Miss Laura Barnes; Leila, Miss Nellie Stack; Fleeta, Miss E. Weatherley; Phyllis, Mrs. J. M'Laren. There was, in addition, a very powerful chorus.

"IOLANTHE" IN SUNDERLAND.

Photographs by the Sunderland Photographic Company.



PRIVATE WILLIS (MR. A. M. RAYSON).



MOUNTARARAT (MR. SOL. ISAACS).



THE FAIRY QUEEN (MISS EVA BROWN).



"WE ARE DAINTY LITTLE FAIRIES, EVER SINGING, EVER DANCING."



STREPHON (MR. E. T. SHIELDS), AND PHYLLIS (MRS. J. M'LAREN).



MOUNTARARAT, THE LORD CHANCELLOR (MR. G. CLARK, JUN.), AND TOLLOLER (MR. R. HASWELL).



IOLANTHE (MISS AMY MÜLLER), AND STREPHON (MR. E. T. SHIELDS).

Jack-in-the-Green, like so many other quaint and charming old-world observances specially consecrated to the first of May, seems to have passed away for ever. More's the pity, for few of the quaint customs connected with May-Day could claim so respectable an antiquity as the jovial, be-wreathed character who owed his first inception, it seems, to a certain flighty King of Somersetshire, the love-stricken Meloas, who disguised himself in green boughs and laid in ambush for the fair Guinevere, as King Arthur's Queen was returning from a hunting expedition. Early in the present century Jack-in-the-Green was a welcome sight, even in London; and the uncouth figure was a notable addition to the May games and dances, though he found a powerful, if stationary, rival in the May-pole. In the Midlands the May-pole was a permanent ornament of the village green, although much more pains was taken with its ornamentation during the first spring month of the year. The Woodstock hawthorn-trees were said to make the best May-poles in the world. May-Day was also long considered the milkmaids' festival, and to them Jack-in-the-Green paid special court.

In London, sixty years ago,
When pretty milkmaids went about,
It was a goodly sight to see
Their May-Day pageant all drawn out,

sang one venerable songster. But, alas! the milch cow and the pretty milkmaids wreathed in may-blossom are no longer familiar objects in London Town, and in their place we have a motley crew terming themselves chimney-sweepers, and more intent on pelf than on holiday-making. In China, as you will note, they have the pretty custom of going out "to meet Spring."

Apropos of the epitaphs quoted in these columns the other week, I have letters from several correspondents, who supply varying versions. One of these runs—

Stranger, weep! though only seven,
Little Tommy's gone to Heaven;

underneath which was written—

Cheer up, stranger, who can tell?
Tommy may have gone to Hell.

After an absence of more than two years, M. Leopold Wenzel has returned to his former post of musical director at the Empire Theatre. I congratulate the directors, the patrons of the house, and M. Wenzel himself. It is the best thing that could happen to one and all. During his absence M. Wenzel has not found a theatre to produce his music successfully, and, on the other hand, the Empire ballets have suffered considerably. I do not for a moment speak slightly of Mr. Ernest Ford, who now leaves the Empire for Daly's. He has brought the orchestra to a pitch of excellence hitherto unknown in London theatres, and made it fit for a concert-hall. His own music has been invariably

tuneful, and scored with a skill which calls for the warmest recognition, but he lacks the supreme power of making his work a living factor of the ballet; it has not been to the dancing and pantomime what the *vox humana* stop is to the organ. This is no fault of Mr. Ford, for the writing of ballet-music is a gift possessed by very few men. M. Wenzel is one, and in Europe I have not heard of half-a-dozen others among



CHINESE "MEETING THE SPRING" ON MAY-DAY.

living composers. His return will be hailed with delight by hundreds with whom he may claim the credit of having made ballet popular. In fact, it may be said that the combination of Madame Katti Lanner and M. Leopold Wenzel is one which cannot be equalled anywhere. Long may it flourish.

Mr. Evelyn Stuart's proposal to raise a regiment of gentlemen has been agitating some of the readers of the *Daily Courier*. I confess to having not a little sympathy with the proposal, for one does not have to read Mr. Kipling's ditty of the gentleman-ranker to feel how hard it must be for a youth brought up in any sort of refinement to become an ordinary Tommy. On the other hand, there are tremendous—shall I say insuperable?—objections to the proposal. But Mr. Evelyn Stuart's disciples think they might be got over. They would adapt Kipling thus—

To the legion of the plucked ones, sore disfeathered at exams,
To his brethren who have pulled but only blanks,
Sings a gentleman of England, who has sickened over crams,
Inviting them to go and join the ranks—
Not with common Tommy Atkins, in his spurs or kilt and spatkins,
Not with every sort of gutter scum and ass;
But this warrior is willing to go out and take the shilling
In a regiment of the fellows of his class.

We're good little chaps, who've stuck exams,
Spun! Spun! Spun!
Spite of expensive coaches and crams.
Done! Done! Done!
Gentleman-rankers all are we,
Willing to guard her Majesty,
Ready to carry and fire (D.V.)
Gun, gun, gun.

Would the privates and the officers be graded by their caste?
Would the ordinary Tommy be Esquire?
Would the corporals be the lordlings who at Sandhurst never passed?
Would the sergeants be live marquises on hire?
Would the country have to look in the colonel for a dook,
Or would nothing but the Prince himself avail?
Can you fancy how the peerage would comport itself as steerage,
Or scramble up the ratlins in a gale?

Would the canteen be an Empire where the Tommies would parade
Of evenings in the mufti of a swell?
Would the rations of this admirable Drawing-Room brigade
Include medoc and champagne and moselle?
Would an "honourable" sentry on a wine-filled comrade's entry
Do everything to keep him from the guard?
Would the private have a valet? Would the ladies of the ballet
Have tea upon the blazoned barrack-yard?

Dear little chaps, I'm grieved that you
Stuck, stuck, stuck.
Life's a toss-up, so don't look blue,
Buck! Buck! Buck!
Gentleman-rankers!—plucked may-be,
Yet you may take it straight from me
Each of them has in high degree
Pluck, pluck, pluck.

The lovely weather made the Punchestown Races a great success, and Society turned out in great force, headed by the Cadogans. Sport was capital. Stratocracy won the Maiden Plate for Mr. Nolan, and Poacher, the favourite mount of Mrs. Lindsay-FitzPatrick, galloped away from his field in the Hunt Cup, piloted by Captain Dewhurst. Twenty-four hunters started for the Farmers' Race, and it was won by Caretaker (Captain Welch up). The Conyngham Cup—almost a best on record—fell to Oldtown, after a fine finish.



JACK-IN-THE-GREEN.

THE PUNCESTOWN RACES.

Photographs by Lafayette, Dublin.



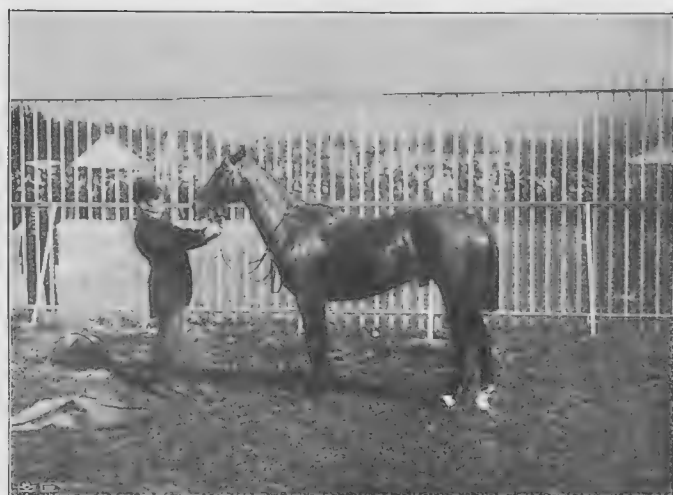
POACHER.



OLDTOWN, WINNER OF THE CONYNGHAM CUP.



STRATOCRACY.



CARETAKER, WINNER OF THE FARMERS' CUP.



IN THE RING.

France, in the person of Mdlle. Lisette Marton, holds the ladies' cycling championship of the world—for the nonce. In the six-days' race at the Aquarium she covered 437 miles 7 laps. Out of the eight ladies at the top of the list four only were English.

By arrangement with Messrs. Forbes-Robertson and Frederick Harrison, Mr. Otho Stuart, an enterprising actor-manager who has toured with "The Masqueraders" and other well-known pieces, and is now



MIDDLE. LISETTE MARTON, LADY CHAMPION OF THE WORLD.
Photo by Henry R. Gibbs, Kingsland Road, N.

playing "lead" in "Tommy Atkins" on the road, is, by-and-by, taking "For the Crown" round the provinces. We shall see how our country cousins will appreciate Mr. John Davidson's fine adaptation of François Coppée's play. Mr. Otho Stuart will, of course, appear as Constantine.

I am delighted to note the genuine success made in "The Geisha" by Mr. Huntley Wright, brother of two other smart comedians, Bertie Wright and Fred Wright junior, and of Miss Haidée Wright, who has made her name by her pathetic performance of Stephanus in "The Sign of the Cross." All these clever young people come of a good theatrical stock, and their sire, Fred Wright the elder, is known and esteemed throughout the profession. "Chips of the old block," again.

Mr. Henry E. ("Adonis") Dixey has been announced to appear in New York in Mr. J. L. Toole's original part of John Rimple, the quasi-sportsman Mayor in Ralph Lumley's amusing play "Thoroughbred." This piece, I might add, has been one of the most popular items in "Old Friend Toole's" repertory during his provincial tour.

Mr. Arthur Bourchier's announcement that he includes a revival of the late Dr. Westland Marston's "Donna Diana" among his forthcoming representations stirs up a flood of memories, not all of them pleasant, I am sorry to say. If only the proposed revival of this adaptation in English verse of Schreyvogel's German play, "Donna Diana" (in its turn taken from the celebrated seventeenth-century Spanish comic dramatist Augustin Moreto's "El Desden con el Desden"), had taken place during the lifetime of its gifted author! In the Princess's production of this play in the 'sixties, the title-rôle was sustained by Mrs. Hermann Vezin, whose husband appeared, together with Adelaide Neilson, in "Life for Life," another Marston drama, at the Lyceum, in March 1869. "The Favourite of Fortune," a well-known comedy, by the same polished and scholarly writer, had included in its cast, when it was played at the Haymarket in 1866, such popular artists as Buckstone, Sothorn, the Chippendales, Nellie Moore, and Kate Saville.

I remember the interesting performance of "Werner" given by Henry Irving at the Lyceum for the benefit of Westland Marston; but I also recollect the failure of his last play, "Under Fire," produced by

Mr. Thomas Thorne at the Vaudeville, and some such revival as is now contemplated would have cheered the declining years of the once brilliantly successful and much-courted dramatist (whose published reminiscences contain, perhaps, the most thoughtful and acute dramatic criticisms I have ever read), and might possibly have lightened the gloom and depression that hung over his son, poor Philip Bourke Marston, the blind bard, as he sat in their dingy lodgings in the Euston Road.

Miss Mona K. Oram, who recently signed an engagement with Mr. Fred Kerr for a year, made her professional début on the stage with Mr. Ben Greet's company, in 1889, in "A Scrap of Paper," and in 1890 she was engaged by Lady Monckton for a performance of the same play, also undertaking the part of Angelique in "A Flying Visit," after which she returned to Mr. Greet for a tour with his Pastoral Players. With him she played Oberon and Phœbe, and was also the Titania in the first performance of Mr. Louis N. Parker's play, "Love in a Mist," and then "went out" with "A Village Priest," on which tour she also played the juvenile lead in "The Parvenu," "Harvest," and "The Ladies' Battle." Then she returned to Mr. Ben Greet's company to play Mabel Vane in "Masks and Faces," but remained with him for eighteen months to play Stella in "A Buried Talent," as well as Juliet, Pauline, Kate Harcastle, Ophelia, and Clara Douglas.

Next came her engagement with Mr. Benson, with whom she played Ophelia, Lady Anne, and Desdemona, during Mrs. Benson's illness, continuing it in order to play Helena in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and she says she cannot feel too grateful to that manager for his kindly encouragement and valuable assistance, for it was with him that all her best work was done. Then came an engagement with Mr. Osmond Tearle, during which she played Juliet, Julie de Mortemar, Portia, Virginia, and Desdemona; but in the autumn of 1894 she returned to Mr. Benson's company, to play the Queen in "Hamlet," Emilia, Mrs. Page, as well as Calphurnia and other parts, after which, for the summer, she joined a stock company at Portsmouth under Mr. Jalland, playing Rosalind, Lady Teazle, Iolanthe, Lydia Languish, Lady Audley, and Pauline. In the autumn of 1895 she again joined Mr. Benson's company for a brief space, to play Ophelia, Rosalind, Beatrice, Portia, and Katharine, during Mrs. Benson's indisposition. She appeared as Jessica in a matinée of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Gaiety Theatre a few months ago. Last summer she became the wife of Mr. Arthur Grenville, the marriage taking place at Shakspeare's Church at Stratford-on-Avon.



MISS MONA K. ORAM.
Photo by Robinson and Sons, Dublin.



MISS MONA K. ORAM.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. J. ROBINSON AND SONS, DUBLIN.

The New Zealand girl is nothing if not athletic. For instance, in the Richmond Amateur Swimming Club of Canterbury, one of the largest and wealthiest clubs in the Colony, and inaugurated in 1893, out of a membership of 320 there are 90 lady members, of whom some 40 are expert swimmers. The accompanying photograph shows a few of the competitors at the club's annual sports, which were held in February. The young lady at the top of the group was successful in winning the competition for the neatest header and the ladies' inter-club handicap.

since his splendid achievements with the bat, he has made him big monetary presents in recognition, and gave him a cheque for £260 when he was included in the Australian team. Jones is a curious-looking fellow on the field. Years ago, he was paralysed down the right side, with the result that half his hair and moustache went white. Among the players who have nicknames with the Australian public are the following: Giffen, "Giff"; Trott, "Joe"; Trumble, "Little Eva"; Graham, "Grummy"; Gregory, "Tich" (after "Little Tich,"



NEW ZEALAND SWIMMERS.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY STANDISH AND PREECE, CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND.

A few personal jottings about the Australian cricketers may be of interest. The law element is strong, there being no fewer than four solicitors in the team—Eady, Johns, McKibbin, and Trumble. Gregory, who keeps a cricket and sports depôt in Sydney, and Iredale, who is in the Lands Department of the New South Wales Government, were married a few weeks before leaving Australia. George Giffen and Harry Trott are both engaged in Post Office work, the one at Adelaide and the other at Melbourne. Donnan is employed in the office of the Colonial Sugar-Refining Company at Sydney, and Darling keeps a cricket-ware shop at Adelaide. The latter's father is a rich miller, who intended his son for a farmer. But a year at the rural business satisfied Joseph, who was intent on getting into the South Australian team. Mr. Darling senior did all he could to dissuade his son from taking to cricket, but,

who is about Gregory's size); Jones, "Jonah"; Iredale, "Nossy"; and Harry is familiarly known as "Jack."

The following epistle from a French insurance company to a firm in this country is a real literary curiosity. It has obviously been first written in French and then translated into English, word for word, by means of the dictionary—

GENTLEMEN,—Our company having no official agents in your country, you should be us very agreeable if you would get it participate with your assuring business and send us, directly, the parts whom you will well reserve us. If you do the honour to present us business, they will be immediately examined; and, in awaiting the expedition of policies, we get you know our acceptance by cable. We shall comply us with the rate applied by landing interested companies, on the proposed risks, and we shall give you the usual allowances.

AN ENCYCLOPÆDIC VETERAN.

There are surely very few among us who have not met with the reply, "Oh, you'll find it in Brewer," on propounding some difficult question, and from my constant dependence on this authority I had gradually come to regard Dr. Brewer as something abstract and impersonal, so it was with mingled feelings of surprise and curiosity that I drove through the glades of Sherwood Forest the other day in order to visit the celebrated *littérateur*. My destination was the picturesque little village of Edwinstowe, which is situated on the southern slope of the Forest, and boasts a Saxon flavour about its name, which is derived from a King Edwin who was slain in battle and afterwards buried on the site of the present parish church. Dr. Brewer's home is just under the shadow of the sacred edifice, and, on turning in at the short avenue, the first thing one sees is a well-planned garden—now aglow with crocuses and other spring flowers—which was laid out and is now entirely kept in order by the veteran sage himself. Here he often works, and preferably in the coldest weather, in spite of the weight of his eighty-six years. There was a delicious literary and artistic atmosphere about the room into which I was presently ushered. Books everywhere—on the tables, in book-cases, and on shelves at the corner of the fireplace—water-colour and other sketches, some good photographs, an array of blue-and-white china on an old carved buffet, and various curios which told of the Far East and the less-distant Continent. Dr. Brewer soon entered, and it would be very difficult to guess his great tale of years, for he shows none of the infirmities of age and keeps up a bright flow of conversation.

"I never use spectacles for reading," he said, in answer to a question, "and, in fact, I take them off whenever I want to see. These same spectacles, by the way, have served me for twenty years."

"What is your recipe for long life?" I inquired anxiously.

"Little to eat, less to drink; little sleep, and plenty to do. Nowadays people eat when they are not hungry, drink when they feel no thirst, and go to bed when they are not in the least tired. In fact," he added, with a laugh, "I believe that we would never die if we could always be healthily hungry."

"How do you divide your time?"

"I find that even now three or four hours' sleep suffices me, and my best time for working is between nine p.m. and three or four a.m. Then I go to bed, but am up in time for corrections of proof and general correspondence before breakfast. During the day I rest for two or three hours on a sofa, and plan out more work. Then, of course, I read a great deal, and am now hard at work on another book."

"You must have a great power of rapidly taking in the contents of a book?" I ventured to remark.

"Well, certainly; until quite lately, I could always read four lines at a time, and in writing my thoughts are invariably several lines ahead of my pen. To tell the truth, I greatly enjoy writing poetry, and in my younger days I wrote a tragedy, several comedies, and some poems."

Questioned as to the origin of the wonderful educational series with which his name will be for ever associated, he said—

"When I was eighteen I found that there were many things I wanted to know which no one could tell me, and I gradually adopted the habit of writing down all my queries in copy-books, leaving blank pages opposite each list, to be filled in when the facts were discovered, in reading or otherwise. In time, copy-books gave place to slips of paper, whose number is now simply incalculable. Then I reflected that, perhaps, other people might also want to know some of these conundrums, and so publication followed."

We talked of his first important book, the "Guide to Science," which appeared in 1839, and which Dr. Brewer calls his "Whys" book. This has run through seventy-nine editions of eight thousand each; but this enormous total is close pressed by the "Guide to English History" (1849), with sixty-six editions.

In 1853 appeared the "Guide to the History of Rome" (twenty-four editions); and this was followed, in 1858, by the "Guide to the Old Testament" (twenty-four editions), while in 1859 came the "Guide to the History of Greece" (fourteen editions), in 1861 the "Guide to the New Testament" (twelve editions), in 1864 the "History of France," and in 1883 the "History of Germany," both of which were on the

same lines, and attained great success. The grand total of these works, the well-known "Reader's Handbook," and the "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable," gives a circulation of no less than four millions.

"How long did it take you to write the 'Dictionary of Phrase and Fable'?" I asked, after expressing my indebtedness on many occasions to the volume in question.

"Fifty years," he replied quietly; "and it will take me ten years to complete a work on which I am at present engaged."

After a general discussion on politics, in which Dr. Brewer maintained an eager and interested part, I was taken upstairs to his *sanctus sanctorum*, the study, of which every inch bespoke the student and writer. Book-cases lined the room, and bundles of proofs and manuscripts were hanging beside the window and on the walls, the latter being further decorated here and there with scribbled notes and memoranda, these forming, as Mrs. Hayman, Dr. Brewer's bright and clever daughter, laughingly pointed out, an insuperable impediment to re-papering or painting. In the centre of the room stood a well-used writing-bureau, with endless lettered pigeon-holes, in which reposed piles of variegated paper slips, each bearing a recorded fact. Mounds of books and manuscript paper were everywhere, and I noticed one heap composed of a very closely printed edition of "Johnson's Poets," which Dr. Brewer was re-reading at the time. A bag of pencils hung near the fireplace close to the low writing-table and chair, and here is another old friend in the shape of the inkstand (shown in accompanying photograph), which has been on active service for over thirty years. Dr. Brewer is fond of old things generally; he despises the comfortable large lounging-chairs of to-day, and finds much more repose in the hard,

high-backed chairs of our forefathers, and he does not care for much of our modern literature. "Will it last?" is the touchstone he applies universally in judging a book. The principal decoration, properly so-called, of his study are two small busts of the Emperor Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugénie, on the mantelpiece.

"When I was in Paris," said my host, "I had the honour of making the Emperor's acquaintance, and he requested me to make a French translation of my 'Guide to Science,' for the use of the Prince Imperial. This I did, after working hard in order to obtain a thorough mastery of the French language, and I called the new version 'La Clef de la Science.' It was

presented to the Emperor by Lord Cowley, who was then our Ambassador at Paris, and his Majesty was kind enough to express his entire satisfaction with the work. It was not so very easy to carry on a conversation with the Emperor; he was extremely reserved, though when he did speak it was always very much to the point."

Dr. Brewer was born in 1810, and there is, therefore, only the question of a few months' difference between his age and that of Mr. Gladstone and Pope Leo XIII. He was one of a large family of brothers and sisters, and though, as he himself confesses, he was rather inclined to idleness as a boy, he amply made up for this by his many successes at Cambridge, where he supported himself entirely by his pen during his time at college. Then came a long round of travelling on the Continent, and on his return to England Dr. Brewer assumed the responsible post of editor for the firm of Messrs. Cassell, with whom he remained for a considerable time. Then followed other literary work, including the editing of the *Morning Herald* in company with a brother. In later years his time has been occupied with the constant revision for fresh editions of his various works. For instance, it is only the other month that the revised edition of "Phrase and Fable" appeared, completing the hundredth thousand of this admirable work. In the preface, which is a facsimile of Dr. Brewer's actual handwriting, he briefly tells the story of the work—how the book or its manuscript has always been at his elbow, "so that new matter might be laid in store, errors corrected, and suggestions utilised to render the work more generally useful and more thoroughly to be depended on." The result has been that in the revised issue 350 pages have been added.

Dr. Brewer is very fond of children, and his grandsons are allowed to invade the sanctity of his study and play about at will. One of them is following so far in the Doctor's footsteps as to begin dictionary-making himself at an early age. For one of the boys the grandfather wrote a Latin grammar, which might, indeed, be called progressive, as it was continually amended and enlarged to suit the advance made by the young student.



DR. BREWER.

THE BOOK AND ITS STORY.

"AN OUTCAST OF THE ISLANDS."*

Those intent "watchers of the sky," the critics, who are ever sweeping it to distinguish fireworks, meteors, planets, and fixed stars from each other, will probably pronounce Mr. Conrad a nebula. This astronomical illustration, by the way, is Schopenhauer's, who classifies writers as either meteors, that make a startling but momentary effect; planets, that outshine the fixed stars, only because they are nearer us, with an influence confined to their own orbit—to their contemporaries; and fixed stars, which, unlike meteors, are eternal, and, unlike planets, are original, shining by their own light; and, unlike both meteors and planets, belong not to one system, one nation only, but to the universe. Mr. Conrad, however, cannot be ranged and ranked under any of these three classes, since he is but a star in the making. His light is all his own, and is unquestionably brilliant, but it is nebulously diffused. A lack of proportion and of concentration, in fact, is the chief fault, almost the sole fault, which the most exacting critic is likely to find with "An Outcast of the Islands." Every mood and movement of the mind of each of his personages, and every mood and movement of nature in the Malay Archipelago, are described with a vividness and power that surprise you; but the descriptions, like the ornaments of the girl in Ovid, submerge the story—

Auferimur cultu et gemmis, auroque
teguntur
Omnia; pars minima est ipsa puella sui.

The story, indeed, is but slight. A dare-devil, simple-hearted, and generous English captain picks up a runaway Dutch cabin-boy, "like a starved cat out of a ditch," and puts him well in the way to fortune. The lad, Peter Willems, becomes confidential agent to a merchant of Macassar, whose half-caste illegitimate daughter he marries without a suspicion of her real paternity. This connection, and Willems' unprincipled smartness, would certainly have gained him the promotion to a partnership, if gambling losses had not tempted him into embezzling his employer's money in the gambler's hope of being able to replace the sum in time to escape detection. Before he had entirely replaced it, however, he is detected and dismissed, while the disgrace of the dismissal is made insupportable by the turning against him of his wife and her people—crawling creatures who, hitherto, had lived on the crumbs that fell from his table. Willems, in despair, is meditating suicide, when Lingard, the English captain, again intervenes to save him and to start him on another road to fortune. He carries the broken man in his brig to an island in the Malay Archipelago, whence Lingard derived, to the envy of all other traders, the vast stores of india-rubber which were to him as a gold-mine. The Arab Abdullah especially longed to find the secret access to this rubber-plantation, and was destined to make the discovery through the incredible treachery of Willems. *Cherchez la femme.* In a novel, at all events, that is the master-key of every mystery. Willems, dumped down in this dreary wilderness, where he had nothing to do but quarrel with the only other white man, Almayer, stumbles upon a magnificent savage, the daughter of a pirate chief, with whom he falls in love to insanity. Of this brief madness some Malayan malcontents take advantage to induce Willems, through the girl Aïssa's influence, to sell the pass to Abdullah. Thus Lingard, on his return to Sanibir, finds himself, through the treachery of a man to whom he had been more than a father, supplanted both as a trader and as a chief. He had even, in the goodness of his heart, brought Willems' wife back with him, only to learn that the scoundrel had been as false to her as to himself. Lingard has not the heart to tell this feeble and foolish creature of her husband's faithlessness, and she might have returned to Macassar thinking him dead, but for Almayer. This worthless intriguer, wishing to rid himself and the island of Willems for ever, sends the traitor's wife in a whale-boat to the rescue of her husband, whom Lingard had condemned to lifelong exile in this wilderness. But Almayer seems somehow to have

forgotten Aïssa, a woman to be reckoned with! Her sublime devotion to Willems' is proof against everything—against her father's hate of him, her people's scorn of him, against the prejudices and the principles of her caste and creed, against the brute's own loathing of her and his savage ill-usage, against everything but—the discovery of a rival.

"Who is she?" asked Aïssa. "My wife," answered Willems, without looking up. "My wife according to our white law which comes from God!" "Your law! Your God!" murmured Aïssa contemptuously. "Give me this revolver," said Willems in a peremptory tone. She took no notice and went on: "Your law . . . or your lies? What am I to believe? I came—I ran to defend you when I saw the strange men. You lied to me with your lips, with your eyes. You crooked heart! Ah, she is the first! Am I then to be a slave?" "You may be what you like," said Willems brutally. "I am going . . ." She cried, seeing him move, "Do not come near me, or you die now! Go while I remember, yet remember." Willems pulled himself together for a struggle. He made a long stride, and saw her raise the revolver. He noticed that she had not cocked it, and said to himself that, even if she did, she would surely miss. Go too high; it was a stiff trigger. He made a step nearer, saw the long barrel moving unsteadily at the end of her extended arm. He thought, "This is my time." He bent his knee slightly, throwing his body forward, and took off with a long bound for a tearing rush. He saw a burst of red flame before his eyes, and was deafened by a report that seemed to him louder than a clap of thunder. Something stopped him short, and he stood aspiring in his nostrils the acrid smell of the blue smoke that drifted from before his eyes like an immense cloud. "Missed, by Heaven! Thought so." And he saw her very far off, throwing her arms up, while the revolver, very small, lay on the ground between them. Missed! He would go and pick it up now. Never before did he understand, as in that second, the joy, the triumphant delight of sunshine and of life. His mouth was full of something salt and warm. He tried to cough, spat out. . . . Who shrieks: "In the name of God, he dies! he dies!" Who dies?—Must pick up—Night! What? . . . Night already?

Here end Willems and the story. Aïssa goes mad; the only other character that is not abjectly base, Lingard, disappears like that cloud to which Mark Antony compares himself, no one knows when, where, or how. Mr. Conrad has Stevenson's power of interesting us even sympathetically in the fortunes of unredeemed scoundrels; but he lacks, though he will not lack it long, the master's reserve and reticence. "By what he omits," says Schiller, "show me the master of style"; and Mr. Conrad occasionally becomes ineffective through overstraining after effect. To paint a field he must needs paint every blade of grass with pre-Raphaelite minuteness, while he observes through a microscope every thought that floats, however casually, through the minds of his personages. That the painting is done either exquisitely or powerfully is unquestionable, but its over-elaboration defeats itself. How-

ever, over-luxuriance, if it is the fault of youth, is also its promise, and the very elaboration which embarrasses and impedes the singular power shown in "An Outcast of the Islands" assures you almost as much as that power itself that Mr. Conrad has a future before him.



CAPTAIN JOSEPH CONRAD.
Photo by Russell and Sons, Baker Street, W.

TO JULIE BON-BON.

Mam'zelle Bon-Bon, good-day to you!
When you appear
The sun comes out
And puts to rout
All darkening fear.
And thus it is I pay to you
Respect sincere.

Mam'zelle Bon-Bon, good luck to you!
May Fortune smile!
Your saucy glance,
Your airy dance,
Bewitch, beguile;
What wonder that I'm struck by you
Who thus can wile?

* "An Outcast of the Islands." By Joseph Conrad. London: T. Fisher Unwin.



MISS ADA REEVE AS JULIE BÖN-BON IN "THE GAY PARISIENNE,"

AT THE DUKE OF YORK'S THEATRE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HANA, STRAND.

THE ART OF THE WILDFOWLER.*

It never rains but it pours, for here are two books on wildfowling, close on each other's heels. Mr. Henry Sharp is an old hand, and he has written this book, the first from his pen, with twenty years' experience to back him. He divides his book into three sections. The first section deals with the wildfowler's outfit and accessories; the second, and longest, with the wildfowl and with wildfowling proper; the third, with shore-birds and shore-bird shooting. Undoubtedly Mr. Henry Sharp understands everything that he writes about, but his strongest point is a thorough knowledge of guns, particularly of punt-guns, of punts, ammunition, and shooting paraphernalia in general. Nevertheless, it is a pity that he should so often introduce the names of certain well-known gunmakers and powder-manufacturers, as he might be accused of advertising these firms.

Mr. Sharp is not by any means the first practical sportsman to whom the idea has occurred of adopting poodles for shooting purposes, though he is perhaps the first that has had sufficient moral courage to state that a poodle might possibly make the most useful dog that a wildfowler could possess. But, considering that not so very many years ago the late

Mr. Abel Chapman is also a veteran sportsman—he has been wildfowling for a quarter of a century—while he is quite an experienced writer. He has given us "Bird Life of the Border," and partly written "Wild Spain," while the present work is based on a series of articles contributed to the *Field*. He is a member of the British Ornithologists' Union; therefore, it is hardly necessary to add that the ornithology of wildfowling interests him far more than does the study of guns and equipment. Indeed, he admits that "these mechanical matters have never possessed for me any great attraction." His experience, he says, has been gained chiefly on the Northern and Eastern coasts—less on the West; while in the South and in Ireland he has never fired a gun. Abroad, however, he has followed wildfowl from one end of Western Europe to the other. His illustrations, thirty-six in number, are worked up mostly from rough sketches of his own, and he thinks that their only merit must lie in their being drawn direct from life—that is, as nearly as wildfowl will ever permit such liberties. Apparently the wildfowl made exceptions in Mr. Chapman's favour, for the sketches could hardly be better drawn. Three large and, of course, excellent illustrations are supplied by Mr. Charles Whympers.



A BIG SHOT AT BRENT GEESE.—CHARLES WHYMPERS.
Reproduced from "First Lessons in the Art of Wildfowling."

Mr. Toomer taught a pig to point partridges, Mr. Sharp might well be able to train a poodle for wildfowling purposes. He is not pedantic, and he believes in advancing with the times in the matter of terminology. He contents himself with the everyday terms—flock, bunch, knob, trip, "or whatever seems best to lay hold upon, as well as handiest for use in the field," and sensible shooting-men follow his example. He twice reminds us that woodcock, snipe, quail, and landrail may not be killed unless the shooter has a game certificate, "for they are game so far as shooting them is concerned."

His description of an attempt to shoot green plover in a gale is excellent. Naturally, he prefers the hammerless gun to the weapon with external hammers—what unprejudiced, practical sportsman nowadays would not?—"first, for the paramount reason of safety, and next, as regards ease and quickness of manipulation." He forgets to mention, however, that even a gun with hammers is preferable to a badly built hammerless gun, for the safety-bolt of the latter can never be pushed forward or backward without giving a "click" sufficiently loud to set upon their guard all wildfowl within a wide radius. "Practical Wildfowling" is a useful book that will interest all persons interested in this particular branch of shooting. The drawings by the author's brother are well-executed and lifelike, and the work contains a good index.

He urgently insists that local gunners and fishermen-fowlers should be treated fairly and with courtesy in the competition that naturally arises between the amateur and the professional, coast fowling being everywhere free to all comers. Equally he deplores the fact that, unfortunately, the opposite course is too often adopted, and that, by endeavouring to overreach the poorer fowlers by force of vulgar wealth, or by meeting unfair tactics with reprisals and otherwise, a bitter feeling is engendered. Comparatively few persons realise how many hardships even the amateur wildfowler has to undergo, or the qualifications it is necessary that he should possess. Mr. Chapman enumerates them, and strongly advises persons of weak constitution to eschew wildfowling.

The Appendix is chiefly a record of sport which the author has enjoyed, either alone or with one or other of his brothers. The reminiscences of two seasons spent in Southern Spain are particularly interesting. "British Wildfowl, their Specific Characteristics and Distribution," is the heading of the last chapter of the book. This chapter is written especially from the punt-gunner's standpoint. "The Art of Wildfowling," too, has an excellent index, and the sportsman who reads Mr. Henry Sharp's "Practical Wildfowling" in order to obtain trustworthy information about guns and shooting paraphernalia, decoys, dogs, and so forth, will undoubtedly also peruse Mr. Abel Chapman's book if he wishes to obtain a thorough knowledge of the ornithology of wildfowl and the art of circumventing them. B. T.

* "Practical Wildfowling," By Henry Sharp, London: L. Upcott Gill.
"First Lessons in the Art of Wildfowling," By Abel Chapman, F.Z.S., London: Horace Cox.

THE THREE-MILLION-POUNDER.

I had arrived at the happy moment in life when a man comes to the conclusion that his wife may be right, after all. Forty-nine times, spread over several years, she had suggested to me that we could afford to keep a carriage, and really ought to—that it was humiliating to think that the De Joneses owned a brougham and victoria of their own, and we, in our maddest moments, only ran to the somewhat faded vehicle of the jobmaster. The fiftieth moved me, and I began to look in the carriage-builders', to study catalogues, and try to bear in mind the technical names of the different vehicles. The other day, when I was going down Regent Street in a carriage with several of my friends and one or two strangers—twelve inside and fourteen out was, I think, the number—at that part of the street very ill-designed by the famous John Nash which merges into the place occupied by the statue of the quoit-thrower, I suddenly was struck by a display of carriages; so I hastily climbed down, at the risk of my neck, and marched into the establishment of the Pneumatic Tyre Company, Limited. Long study in the art of seeing without buying the things in *bric-à-brac* shops enabled me to get a prodigious amount of information and "copy." I happened to bump up against one of the wheels, and was surprised that the tyre did not bruise me.

"Is that a novelty in the way of tyres?" I said innocently to the gentleman who was showing me round.

"It is not a novelty exactly," he replied, "but it is a splendid invention."

At that moment a man, whose face I seemed to recognise, was passing, and he stopped to join in the conversation.

"That's the Dunlop-Welch tyre," he said.

"It's very pretty," I replied. "What does it do?"

"It just takes half the strain off the horses, and prevents people from being jolted inside-out upon rough roads."

"That would hardly suit me: I have a sluggish liver, and like to have it shaken up a bit when I take a drive."

"Oh, nonsense!" he said, with a smile.

"Look here," said I, "I seem to know your face. Have not I seen your portrait in some sporting paper? May I ask who you are?"

"You may have seen my portrait, for it has appeared because I won nine Irish Cycling Championships, with the aid," he added modestly, "of the Dunlop tyre."

Then suddenly intelligence came to me.

"Why, this is the same thing," I interrupted, "as the pneumatic tyre for cycles. Talking of cycles, by the way, I have heard a ridiculous story about the pneumatic tyre. Someone, I am told, has given three million pounds for it—not, of course, that I believe such an absurd story."



DUBLIN HOUSE, WHERE THE COMPANY STARTED.



THE WHEEL-SHOP.

"It is not absurd," he replied indignantly; "it's perfectly true. My name is Arthur du Cros. I am manager of the company, and I ought to know."

I whistled, but it was not for want of thought. "Do tell me a little about it," I said; "it will give me some 'copy' for *The Sketch*."

"It's a simple history. In 1889 Mr. Dunlop, of Belfast, when trying to improve the cycle for the benefit of his son, invented a practical way

enormously, and also to diminish friction, vibration, jolting, bumping, and so on."

"How?" I asked blandly.

"If you have a hard tyre, even one of solid rubber, whenever you meet any stone or pebble on the road, you have got to force it in or climb over it. With a pneumatic tyre it simply sinks into the tyre for a moment as the wheel passes on."

"Obviously that makes a vast difference to the rider. But if the thing should happen to be sharp and cut through the rubber?" I inquired.

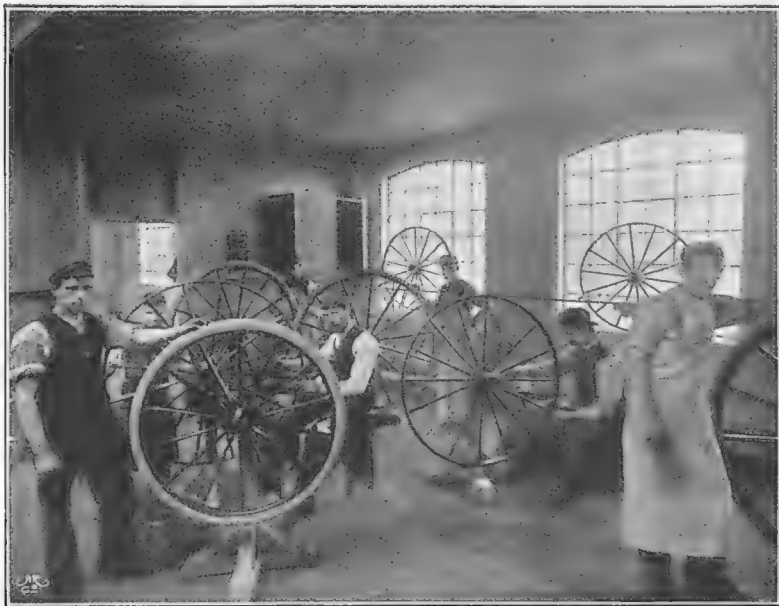
"That used to be the trouble," he replied; "and when, as at first, the tube was fastened solidly on the wheel, repairs were very troublesome. Luckily, Mr. C. K. Welch, now engineer for the company, invented an easy and rapid method of detaching and attaching the tube and covering. To-day, with our improved cover, punctures are very rare, and tens of thousands of miles may be ridden without one happening; and when it does happen, the repair can be made, according to the magnitude of the cut, in a short space of time—so short, on some occasions, as two minutes."

"And the same applies to these carriage-tyres?"

"Oh, yes. You look here." Then he showed me by actual performance how simple and easy was the job.

"One would think," I remarked, "that the rivalry must be very keen."

"You forget," he observed, "that the object of the patent law is to protect inventors from rivals. You don't think that the Syndicate would



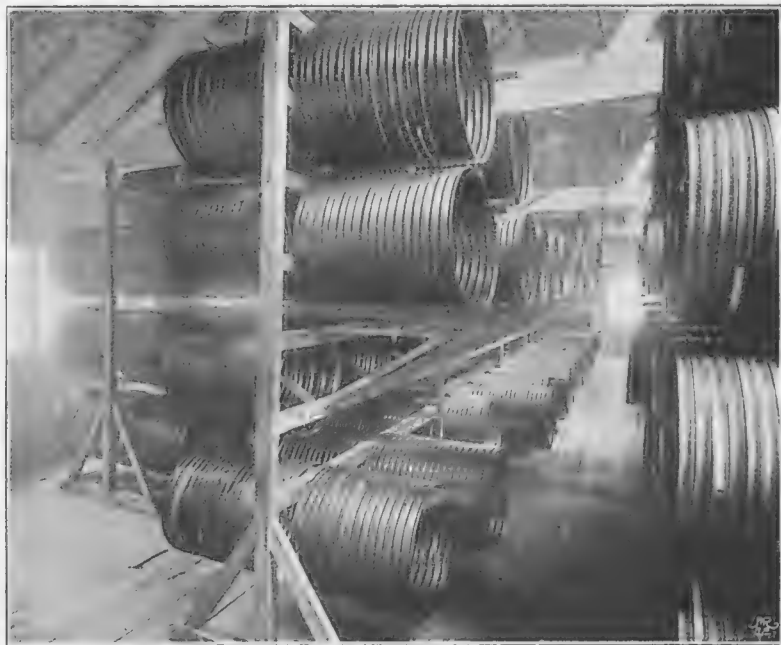
PART OF THE PAINT-SHOP.

of attaching a cushion of compressed air to the wheel of the 'bike.' A rider named Hume tried it at the Easter Belfast Races, and won the three he entered hands down. Then my father, Mr. Harvey du Cros, a well-known athlete, promptly saw the immense value of the invention. He formed a company, with a capital of £25,000, to work it; subsequently that capital was increased to £262,000. The company, in its short career, earned over five hundred thousand in profits, and then a syndicate bought up all its rights and privileges for the sum of three millions; not such a rash thing, after all, seeing that our last year's profit was over two hundred and twenty thousand, nearly half as much again as in '94."

"Prodegeous!" I said, in the words of Dominic Sampson, and I sat down, gasping for breath, in a prettily built victoria; "but what is this precious tyre?"

"Don't you ride a bicycle?" he said, looking at me in amazement.

"I rode one once, a machine with a wheel about as high as the wheel at Earl's Court; but I did not ride on the thing as long a time as



A PART OF THE RIM-SHOP.

have given three millions unless they were getting something like a monopoly? Moreover, since the purchase they have bought up the two most serious competitors, the Clincher and Palmer tyres, paying a million sterling in the operation."

I gasped again. "Isn't it a little bit reckless?"

Mr. Arthur du Cros beamed. "We have practically a monopoly now. Every week we have sent to our Coventry works the component parts of twenty-five thousand tyres, yet it's a prodigious task to keep pace with the demand; while we have patents and factories in Canada, Australia, the States, Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, and Italy. With an unlimited demand for an article of which we have a monopoly, and can sell at over three guineas, it isn't very difficult to earn the revenue of not a few foreign states. By-the-by," he observed, "if you like to try a tyre—"

"I have an oath against bicycling," I interrupted. "Ever since that little experience I mentioned—"

"I mean on the carriage," he said. "I can give you an opportunity—I am just going out for a drive."

"I think I would not risk it in London," I observed. "I don't see how you are to work a brake."

"Nonsense," he replied; "turn that wheel if you can," and he jammed down a lever.

I found a curious toothed-rubber brake which gripped the wheel more firmly than any ordinary brake can hold a metal tyre. Feeling reassured, I got into his victoria, and, under my guidance, the coachman took us over the worst samples of vestry mismanagement. The carriage glided over as if it were a sleigh on swept ice. When needful the brake stopped it dead. We whisked round sharp corners, without skidding, though the road was wet, and I ultimately came to the conclusion that the pneumatic tyre is just the thing to make a carriage delightful, to lengthen the life of the horses, and dull the roar of the street that too often, alas! disturbs my inspiration when I am engaged on the long-contemplated Epic that is to be the crowning work of this crowded and rushing century.



ANOTHER CORNER OF THE PAINT-SHOP.

it lay on me, and I still have a bump on the forehead as a souvenir of my one experience."

"A pneumatic tyre," he said, "is an indiarubber tube, into which air is forced to a sixty-pound pressure. It is fastened round the periphery of the cycle-wheels, and a protecting cover of thick indiarubber is put over it. The result is resilience to increase its speed

THE ART OF THE DAY.

Studies by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. Exhibited at the Fine Art Society's Gallery.



A STUDY FOR "THE CAR OF LOVE."



FOR "THE SIRENS."



FOR "THE PILGRIM OF LOVE."



FOR "THE SIRENS."

ART NOTES.

The New Gallery Exhibition, which was opened to the public on Monday, April 27, may be said to be neither better nor worse than its predecessors. This, however, is not to say that there are no special and individual excellences in the present show, for, however equal may be the net result of general merit, the details of all exhibitions remain interesting and peculiar. Of course, the fault one always has to find in visiting these academic exhibitions of the year is the lack of genuine artistic ideas. The few great artists of the world have had ideas, both in matter of treatment and in matter of suggestion, and we regret to think that the common or annual painter trades not so much upon artistic ideas as upon the ideas of artists.

This is the first criticism that "rises in the heart and gathers to the eyes" in looking on these happy spring-time walls, and "dreaming of the days that are no more." You are aware, in a word, of a general sentiment upon entering these historic rooms very much of the same nature as you experienced last year, or two or three years ago. But let us, on the other hand, condescend to facts, and discover the excellence of separate works. In the first instance, let us note a marvellous Sargent, "Countess Clary Aldringen," the vitality and tense beauty of which could not reasonably be bettered. The lady, attired in white, has, as it seems, risen from the sofa to greet you. Her couch, beautiful in colour, seems—if we do not speak hyperbolically—to be aware of its recent visitor. The brush-work, the modelling, and the quick, living



LA CIGARETTE.—P. HELIEU.
Exhibited at the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers.

observation are throughout superbly realised. It has become quite a commonplace to praise Mr. Sargent's work; but never was praise less commonly deserved.

Mr. Watts sends a noble work, "Earth," in which he seems really to have achieved his ideal surface in oils. The colour is inimitable, and is so clearly the result of careful design and forethoughtfulness that its beauty becomes finally an ineffaceable memory. Mrs. Stokes, who for years has been one of the artistic mainstays of the New Gallery, contributes an excellent work, "The Page," in her newest manner—a manner, be it observed, quite admirable, and open only to the criticism that it somewhat lacks originality; it is a repetition of an ancient manner, but, granting that fact, it is impossible to deny it extreme cleverness and an intimate intelligence.

Again, we must not omit to mention Mr. Arthur Lemon's extraordinary landscape, "Campagna Romana." Here we are tempted to quote a few lines from Mrs. Meynell's exquisite sonnet, and explain their significance in connection with Mr. Lemon's work—

O'er the Campagna it is dim, warm weather;
Spring comes with a full heart, silently,
And many thoughts: a faint flash of the sea
Divides two mists; straight falls the falling feather.

That is Mr. Lemon's landscape, in sentiment, if not in description. The dim, warm weather is there; spring is there "with a full heart"; the illimitable spaces, the atmosphere, particle for particle, the luminosity of the effect are all remarkably interpreted by a painter who, in vision, is also a poet.

Sir Edward Burne-Jones contributes two pictures, one "Aurora," the other "The Dream of Lancelot at the Chapel of the San Graal," both carefully and beautifully painted. The latter picture is particularly lovely on account of the wonderful expression of tenderness and regret shown by the angel who stands at the gate of the chapel. Mr. Philip Burne-Jones once more brings forward an imaginative work, which is a great improvement on such a canvas, for example, as "Earth-rise from the

Moon," with which he bewildered our astonished eyes some two or three years ago. This year's, "The Game of Life and Death," is really a piece of fine imagination, part of the actual pictorial handling being remarkably good, especially in the instance of the figure in the foreground.

Mr. Adrian Stokes sends an admirably painted canvas, "Behind the Dunes," the only possible adverse criticism of which could be that he has spread himself out upon rather too large a surface. Among other landscapes we must notice Professor Costa's "Risveglio—the Sun's First Rays on the Carrara Mountains," a very exquisite work, which, outside Mr. Lemon's world of poetic realism, possesses, at all events, the best qualities of ideal poetry. We may say, however, in passing, that we have seen nothing so good as this since four years ago, from Professor Costa's brush, when he exhibited, at the New Gallery, that beautiful canvas, "If Love be dead, why dost thou rise, O Sun!" There are two "Golden Moon" landscapes, one by Mr. Fred Hall, the other by Mr. Edward Stott. Mr. Hall's picture is the work of a true artist. Over a dim moonlit hill a flock of sheep, in vital movement, winds its way; all the evening atmosphere is here, and the sentiment of the lovely moonlight. Mr. Edward Stott's picture also presents a hill, under similar conditions; but he shows, for his contrasted effect, a group of naked bathers standing near the brink of still water. If not quite achieving the genuinely poetic heights of Mr. Hall's canvas, the work is still full of undoubted beauty.

We must be content, for the rest, with a summary of names and pictures which are worthy of note. There is Mr. Hitchcock's "Dream of Christmas," a remarkable composition, recalling the sentiment of Von Uhde's splendid "First Christmas Eve"; there is, too, Mr. Leslie Thompson's fine "Ophelia," dimly mysterious; and we must not omit the names of Mr. J. J. Shannon, Mr. Parsons, Mr. East, Mr. Richmond, Mr. Jacob-Hood, Mr. Tomson, Mr. Peppercorn, Miss Mary Gow, Mr. Wetherbee, Mr. Wontner, and Mr. Hugh Glazebrook, who all send excellent work of its kind.

The Annual Amateur Art Exhibition will be held, under the presidency of the Hon. Mrs. William Lowther, at No. 1, Belgrave Square (by kind permission of Mr. Reuben Sassoon), from Monday to Saturday inclusive, and will present many new features, among which we may specify primarily a selection of pictures and statuary from the works of the Société des Artistes Amateurs, who held their first exhibition in Paris last year in the Champs Elysées. The loan collection this year is taken from the works of portrait-limners and miniaturists of the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, among whom H. Edridge, A.R.A., J. W. Slater, and Thomas Heaphy were some of the most famous, though now partly forgotten. This exhibition of their works, for the first time, will be highly interesting, and the drawings themselves are very beautiful and characteristic. Her Majesty the Queen is sending from Windsor a number of Edridge's full-length portraits—George III. (1803), Queen Charlotte, Princess Augusta (1802), Princess Elizabeth, Princess Amelia, Princess Sophia, Princess Mary, the Duke of Sussex, and several small heads.

Born at Paddington, in 1769, son of a tradesman, Edridge was apprenticed to William Pether, the mezzotint engraver and landscape painter, at the age of fourteen, admitted student of the Royal Academy and gained the silver medal at the age of seventeen, and attracted the notice of Sir J. Reynolds, who allowed him to make miniature copies of his works. He afterwards set up as portrait-painter and married. He exhibited at the Royal Academy first a miniature, and, in 1803, portraits of the King and Queen. He first drew in pencil and Indian-ink, and then elaborately in water-colour, and, later still, he took to landscape in water-colour. In 1820 he was elected Associate of the Royal Academy. He travelled in France in 1817 and 1819. His daughter died at the age of seventeen, and his son followed her soon after. These griefs shattered his constitution, and he died in Margaret Street, Cavendish Square, in 1821, and was buried in Bushey Churchyard.

Mrs. Maxwell Lyte will, as usual, have a special department for the sale of water-colours given to her by many artists and amateurs to be sold entirely for the benefit of the three charities for which the exhibition is held. They will comprise sketches by Miss Clara Montalba, Lady Jephson, Viscountess Hood, Mr. Hallam Murray, Sir John Adye, Sir Edmund Henderson, and Lady Fitzgerald.

It may be mentioned in this column, as a matter of interesting gossip, that the other day, at Sotheby's, the very large price of £300 was given for a mezzotint print by Prince Rupert of Bulgaria called "The Execution of John the Baptist." It appears that this work has the reputation of being one of the earliest known mezzotints extant.

Immediately the full details of the Battle of Doornkop became known, Messrs. Henry Graves and Co. commissioned Mr. Caton Woodville to obtain details of the engagement and paint a large canvas, ten feet by six, of the struggle, to be entitled "Jameson's Last Stand." The painting is a realistic depiction of this stirring battle, and, when engraved, will form a companion to their recently published "Charge of the Light Brigade."

THE STORY OF THE ACADEMY DINNER.

We have all heard that there is to be no Academy Dinner this year—a fitting tribute to the memory of Lord Leighton. We shall thus, for once, be without an event which has really become an institution in English life.

The dinner is more than a field-night for the R.A.'s and the A.R.A.'s, more than a prelude to the opening of the exhibition. It means a gathering of all the talents—an occasion when our leaders in politics, in



SIR J. E. MILLAIS IN SCOTLAND.

law, in literature, in the various high walks of life, can meet together under the auspices of art. If we had a list of the men who have dined with the Academicians since they founded their dinner, we should have an index to the modern history of England.

It is worth one's while—and the thing can be done in a gossip way—to glance at the history of the Academy Dinner as an English institution. The best guide in such a matter is William Sandby, who may be regarded as the historian of the Academy from every point of view. What he does not tell in his work is, perhaps, hardly worth knowing—up to the period, that is to say, to which he came.

Obviously, the Academy was before the annual dinner—as a matter of fact, several years before. No doubt there were dinners to wish the Academy well, when it was founded, and also during its cradle-days. But the strictly Academy Dinner was not inaugurated until the year 1771, while the Academy had come into being in 1768. Necessarily, a little time elapsed before we find a clear set of rules created for the management of the dinner. The Anglo-Saxon has this characteristic, that he generally sees he has the thing before he begins to plank it out into rules.

The average man would probably say that the Academy Dinner is a public function—what a dreadful word, this “function,” only, where's a better? Well, in this, the average man, who is so very often right, would be wrong. It is not a public dinner, but a banquet given by the members of the Academy to a certain number of illustrious and distinguished guests. To be quite precise, the description is, “Persons in elevated situations, of high rank, distinguished talents, or known patrons of the arts.” You see, the only peep in the man has who is not absolutely somebody, is in the last words, and, then, a patron of the arts is always a man of parts, is he not?

Going over the set of rules which one finds in Sandby, it appears that when a Prince of the blood is invited to the dinner, he is waited upon personally by the President. A code of rules generally goes on and on in spirit, if not always in the strict letter, and so again it is set out that the number of invitations to the dinner is limited to a hundred and forty. That, of course, is exclusive of those sent to the members and “to the musicians,” although now the quoted phrase hardly applies. Once upon a time the musical programme of the dinner consisted mainly of singing, but the all-conquering string-band of the modern English public banquet has extended even unto the Royal Academy.

The cost of the dinner is provided out of

the funds of the society, and, as has been seen, each guest is present in virtue of a special and personal invitation. The list of invitations is made up by the President and Council, and, needless to tell, when anybody is asked to dine “in the great room of the Academy previous to the opening of the exhibition,” he is generally able to attend. The lines upon which the invitation-list is drawn up have already been made clear; it is the notable ones who are bidden. For long the dinners were not reported in the newspapers—at all events, not directly by newspaper representatives.

A point of some interest attaches to how a change took place in that—a change under which the speeches were made accessible to any of the great newspapers that wished to record them. The Prince Consort had been present at the dinner of 1851, the year of the “exhibition of the industry of all the nations,” which had been organised on his initiative, and which has had so many successors. Keen interest was manifested in the speech which he had made, and next year it was decided that the dinner should be absolutely reported. Prince Albert could make a better speech, perhaps, than any royalty we have had for long, and the one by him at the Academy Dinner of 1851 is an illustration of this.

He spoke of the necessity of encouraging art if it was to thrive, and of the chilling effect of unfair criticism. Yet proper and reasonable criticism was necessary, if only in the interest of art itself. He drew rather a striking comparison between the surroundings amid which art flourished in the middle of the nineteenth century, and at the time when “Madonnas” were painted in the seclusion of convents. The nineteenth century saw a vast array of artists, and for judge a great public. Works of art, by being publicly exhibited and offered for sale, were becoming articles of trade, subject, as such, to the laws of markets and fashions. It was to an institution like the Academy to which they must look for a counterpoise to these conditions, and he spoke warmly of its work on behalf of art. At another point, Prince Albert referred to the Academy as a constitutional link between the Crown and the artistic body. And then, in closing, he exclaimed, “May the Academy long flourish and continue its career of usefulness!”

Goldsmith was present at the first annual dinner of the Academy, when Sir Joshua Reynolds was in the chair. Reynolds, of course, begins the list of the Presidents of the Academy, and this first dinner was hardly the grand affair of more recent years. There is even the record about it that twenty-five gentlemen were invited, and that the dinner was charged at “five shillings a-head, with one-and-sixpence dessert.” Then another historic dinner was that of the year 1828, when Sir Walter Scott attended. He had been appointed antiquarian to the Academy the year before, and he had such a greeting from the company at the dinner as had never been known before. No wonder, for who loomed so great in those days as the Wizard of the North? Sir Thomas Lawrence, the President, very well interpreted Scott's position by quoting three lines—

If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast
And all things unbecoming.

This was in proposing Scott's health, and the novelist, in replying, was equally happy. They had, he said, elected him to a sinecure, as he thought—to the position of antiquary—but immediately he presented himself they set him one of the most difficult of things, the making of a speech. Then he went on for a little, and he could not, had he spoken for a hour, have wearied his enthusiastic hearers.

Yes, the Academy Dinner is rich in its traditions.



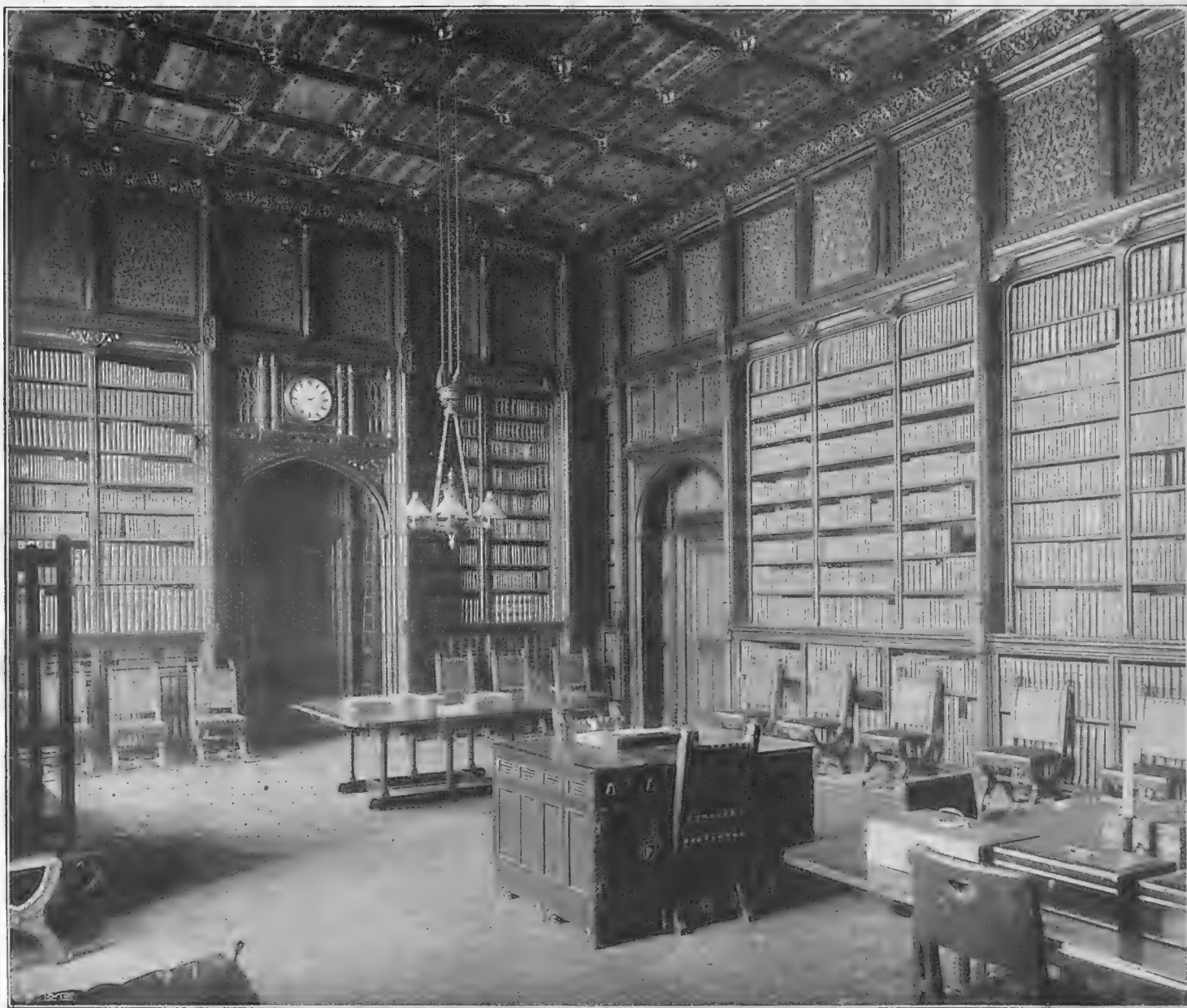
THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER AND GEORGE III.
Pictures by Edridge in Her Majesty's possession at Windsor.

HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY.

Mr. Birrell recently startled the House of Commons by the statement that he had never read a book in the Library. Another member of studious mind has confessed that, within the precincts of the House, he scarcely ever read a book through from beginning to end. Yet, when the division bells ring, scores of gentlemen come hurrying out of the Library, and, when the division is over, they go rapidly back to their chairs. The doors are closed against ordinary mortals during the sitting of the House, but sometimes a member gives a stranger the inestimable privilege of peering through the glass doors at his colleagues reading or writing. There is more writing than reading done in the Library. Many members write their letters there; some of them conduct quite a large business correspondence. Mr. Gladstone's guide, host, and friend,

apartments, where our legislators may be seen poring over Blue Books, or writing ambiguous letters to their constituents.

The farther through the rooms you go, the quieter you find the Library. In the far room a member is not expected to speak to his neighbour. Here you will find a bust of Sir Erskine May, which was presented to the House by the friends of the late Clerk, and also the huge key used at the official visitation of the vaults under the old Houses of Parliament. This is a cosy room, in which our legislators sit for hours. In a long sitting a considerable number of members take refuge here, some to read, and others to fall into a slumber, from which they are startled by the loud cry of "Division." During the last Parliament one of the most frequent of its occupants was Mr. Brodrick, who had the distinction of tripping up the late Government; and among others who may be often seen nowadays is Mr. Buchanan, whose speeches show his familiarity with Blue Books. No refreshments are supplied in any of the rooms, not even the proverbial



HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. RUSSELL AND SONS, BAKER STREET, W.

Mr. Armitstead, and Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, when members of the House, were still engaged in a great business, which they managed from the Library. Lawyers take their briefs there. Mr. Haldane, or Mr. Grant Lawson, for instance, may be seen busy at work while the mere society member is at play. Journalists write their newspaper articles, and pushful politicians make quotations from Hansard. Mr. Healy, the industrious member, usually sits at the same place.

The Library consists of five rooms on the same floor as the House itself, overlooking the Thames. The rooms open upon each other. They are lofty and handsome, with fine woodwork, and are lit by electricity. In the first room, entered from the corridor leading from the Members' Lobby, there is a bust of Joseph Hume. It is more neglected in these days of extravagance than it ought to be. A Scottish Radical who took the present writer through the Library did not know whose bust it was till he looked. To the right of this apartment, and between it and the Dining-room, there is a room where maps and directories and files are kept, and where members may consult a huge globe. Here also is a copying-press in which members may copy their letters as methodically as if they were in a counting-house. Turning back through the first room, there is to the left of it a series of three large

biscuit; smoking is forbidden; there are no novels, and there are no newspapers but the *Times*. The other newspapers are kept in a separate apartment leading off the Tea-room.

One can easily imagine that the Library, as a whole, has not much temptation for a mere dilettante. It is instructive rather than entertaining. Statutes and law books, reference books, Parliamentary reports, and volumes of Hansard fill many of the shelves. To these "things in books' clothing" Charles Lamb would have refused the title of books. There would have been only too much risk of the gentle "Elia," when in search of some kind-hearted play-book, coming "bolt upon a withering population essay." It is to be feared that he would regard as intruders even the fine collection of Parliamentary tracts and of seventeenth-century books relating to political matters which are to be found here. But the Library is by no means wholly composed of such. There is an admirable collection of poetry, there are plenty of biographies, and in the far room there are some rare artistic books with precious plates and beautiful bindings. Here a member reached down by hazard a book to show to the writer, and it proved to be Isaac D'Israeli's "Curiosities of Literature." The Library has been formed since the burning of the old Houses. Part of it, known as the Speaker's Library, is in his official residence.



MDLLE. IRMLER IN "LA DANSE," AT THE EMPIRE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS, UPPER BAKER STREET, N.W.

THE EMPIRE OF INDIA EXHIBITION.

On a fine morning towards the end of April two journalists might have been seen taking an airing in the grounds of the unopened Exhibition at Earl's Court. Mr. Will E. Chapman, head of the Press Department, was one; my modesty keeps me from even hinting at the identity of the other. Around them hundreds of workmen were busily engaged. Under their skilled hands pavilions were rising with a rapidity suggestive of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainment"; the huge, hideous Great Wheel, most offensive of sights, was receiving a coat of paint; cunningly decorated borders were hiding the limits of the grounds, and within a dozen buildings stages were being erected, ceilings decorated, and flooring put down. Chaos, which had evidently had a long reign, would presently abdicate.

"What are the chief attractions of the present Exhibition?" said the man who had not been in Earl's Court long.

"Last year," said Mr. Chapman, "we practically exploited Southern India. This time we are dealing largely with the North-West Provinces and Ceylon. The greatest improvement, from the point of view of visitors, is this Arcade. It connects the Western Gardens near the Welcome Club with the Earl's Court and Lillie Road entrances. Sometimes, last summer, men having invitations or engagements to dine at the Welcome Club would come in at the Earl's Court entrance and find they had three-quarters of a mile to walk to their dinner. We have reduced the distance to something under two hundred and fifty yards, and saved over half a mile."

"Will there be a really striking difference between the old and new shows?" continued the ignorant one.

"Indeed there will," said Mr. Chapman. "To begin with, there is an entire change of architectural style."

"See," he continued, stopping for a moment before a beautiful house built on Cingalese pattern, "here was a Burmese Palace last year. This time it will be given up to juggling and Nautch-girls—the cleverest we could find in India. In the Queen's Palace, where the Loan Exhibition of the East India Company was, there will be a collection of fresh curios from India and Ceylon. Our agents have been hard at work all through the autumn and winter, and have secured novelties of all sorts, living and dead. The great difficulty was in getting skilled native Indian workmen and artists. We have all we want now, but they would not come without a lot of persuasion."

"What do you claim to be the greatest novelty of the present Exhibition?"

"There are so many," replied Mr. Chapman modestly, "that it is difficult to say. Here," he continued, pointing to a huge circular building, "is the largest panorama in the world." He led the way inside the building, where one of the most interesting pictures possible to imagine lay stretched out in glorious length.

It represents Ancient Rome, possibly on the day of Constantine's entry into the Eternal City, and is the work of two German artists, Buhlmann and Wagner. They were twenty years at work upon it. Munich and Berlin have already seen the colossal sight, and, since its visit to the German capital, a home has been found in the grounds of Earl's Court. Rolled up for transit, the canvas weighed five tons. To adequately describe the beauties of this panorama would take pages and an art critic. The atmosphere, grouping, and colouring are delightful; it is a breathing picture of the most interesting city of Europe at a momentous period of its career. Such a glimpse of the old world will be one of the most interesting sights of the Earl's Court Exhibition.

All the most popular features of the place have been preserved, and such as called for improvement have been altered. A fresh scheme of colouring is noticeable in the grounds, where the somewhat hard white has been replaced by cream tints. A tower as high as the Wheel, and infinitely less offensive to the sight, is being erected, and there will be lifts to the top for the benefit of those people to whom a fine view is more alluring than a hard climb. The amateur aeronaut may rejoice, for a captive balloon will be at his disposal; and the scientist will be glad, for he will be able to watch human development in a baby-incubator. So far as can be seen, the directors seem determined to be all things to all men, and make their Exhibition a lodestone which shall attract "brass" instead of steel. It will be Indian in name, and cosmopolitan in contents. There will be a huge spectacular ballet, not yet describable.

If Jupiter Pluvius will only behave like a gentleman, success is assured. The gardens, beautifully laid out and illuminated, as of old; the lake, with electric launches, will delight thousands; the military bands will alone be sufficient to draw all London on fine, warm evenings; and, recognising these facts, the authorities have spared neither money nor trouble to bring the gardens into good condition. The lawns, somewhat bare and scrubby last year, are now covered with fine, rich grass, and the boundaries are so carefully painted that the spectator sees ground apparently stretching away into space. The houses round the Exhibition are content to be useful rather than beautiful, and it is something of a triumph to give visitors lovely grounds with no suggestion of ugliness beyond.

Most of the animals seen last summer have spent the winter on the premises. The elephants are alive and well; so are the camels. All seemed happy, though the camels had the hump.

The opening day is fixed for Saturday next (May 9), so that the company will only have six months in which to reap the reward of its labours. But Mr. Kiralfy and his colleagues rely upon the generous patronage that the public bestows upon a really good entertainment, and are content to stand or fall by the popular verdict. *Entre nous*, they have no cause for anxiety.

A STAGE SLAVEY.

Miss Louie Freear has unmistakably caught the town, or at least, that section of the town which worships at the sacred lamp of musical burlesque. Drop in to visit "The Gay Parisienne," at the Duke of York's Theatre, any evening, and you will note that when a quaint little figure, clad in a slavey's cap and gown, makes her appearance from the wings, the audience bubbles over with suppressed laughter, and, as soon as the little woman opens her mouth, positively roars with merriment. Yet to most of them perchance Louie Freear is a totally new name, and it is by sheer dint of comic force and a touch of grotesque genius that she makes her audiences laugh as they do. If you hear her sing the ditty of "Sister Mary Jane's Top Note" (which "sets the bells a-ringing, and stops the birds from singing"), you will come to the conclusion that she is an instinctive comedian, and you will appreciate the sense of the management, who have elaborated her part by interpolating two or three songs for her in a scene where she poses alternately as an Adelphi heroine, a leading lady, and a diva, cleverly indicating in the latter character the methods pursued by Madame von Palmay in "The Grand Duke."

The Sketch has already noticed Miss Freear, but her success has been so rapid that a representative called to have a chat with "Ruth," and the little lady proved to be as lively and instinct with humour off the stage as on.

"Have I been long on the stage? Well, I must leave that to your own judgment—I made my début when I was eight weeks old, in a theatre situated on the Waterloo Road; but I believe that on this occasion there was only a very short run. I come of a theatrical family," she continued, nodding her head. "I have four brothers in the profession, and they are very smart fellows, particularly Willie; but I expect you have heard of him."

"I presume that you cannot remember a time when you were really out of the bill?"

"Why, you're about right. I was playing in pantomimes fifteen years ago, and I was at Sanger's Westminster Bridge Road establishment for two or three years, taking character-parts. It was there that I first assumed the rôle destined to bring me luck—that of a slavey. I also used to take," she added, with a twinkle in her eye, "the part of a policeman. After a time I joined a juvenile opera-troupe for three months, going on to Moore and Burgess's, where, attired in a gentleman's evening-dress, I used to sing Pony Moore's own song, 'Captain Mishler.'"

"You have certainly bought your extraordinary versatility by much hard work."

"I think I learnt most of what I know," she answered meditatively, "when I was one of Montague Roby's 'Midget Minstrels.' I was with them six years, and I was never happier in my life: you see, we were all boys and girls together, and life seemed one long holiday. Mr. Bernard Roby was a splendid stage-manager, and his brother, Montague Roby, a splendid character-actor, and both unwearied teachers in their efforts to improve and encourage those working with them."

"I suppose you have never been abroad?"

"Indeed I have," she answered, laughing, "all the way to South Africa. I went out with my brother Willie Freear's Company, and we spent about eighteen months out there. Did I like it? Yes, but I like being at home best. Of course, Johannesburg was very different then to what it is now. There were a few fine hotels, but most of the houses were simply made of corrugated iron, and we used to have quaint audiences; very enthusiastic, but, in the case of the Boers—for you mustn't believe what people say about their never going to the theatre, and that sort of thing—understanding very little of what we said. Our programme used to be made up of ballads and sketches. They prefer something light and cheerful in the Colonies. Of course, Cape Town was very pleasant and homelike—"

"But you didn't feel tempted to stay out there for good and all?"

"No, indeed. I came back to Mr. Roby, and went in for playing old women. I made a great hit in a musical farce called 'Thomas, Tom, and Tommy,' my part being that of a Miss Sabina Snaptan, a wizened old lady who finds out she is going to be married for her money. Then I took a turn with the Ben Greet Company. It was rather a change, after my old-women parts, to play Puck in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' but I confess I enjoyed it quite as well. I was a long time with Mr. Ben Greet, and took part in the Stratford-on-Avon performances a year ago. I greatly enjoyed acting Mopsa in the 'Winter's Tale.'"

"I fancy I heard of you being at Nottingham last winter?"

"Yes, I made a big hit as Cheekie in the pantomime of 'Aladdin.'"

"And how did you first make acquaintance with 'The Gay Parisienne'?"

"You see, I am under engagement to Mr. William Greet, of the Lyric, but he kindly lent me to the Duke of York's management; and at first I thought I was only going to have quite a small part."

"Then, did you elaborate the part?"

"Well," replied my little hostess modestly, "I knew that the ordinary pretty stage slavey was of no use, and I had studied with some interest the real article; so I made my mother buy me an outfit, including these big, shapeless boots," and Miss Freear shook her tiny feet free of the characteristic footgear in which she trips so nimbly.

"And even on the first night you scored a big success?"

"Yes, my song caught on at once," and she hummed gaily—

"Some people have the money, others have the brains,
But lots would like to have a voice like Sister Mary Jane's."



MISS FREEAR ON THE STAGE AS RUTH.



MISS FREEAR IN REAL LIFE.



MISS ADA REEVE AS JULIE BON-BON, AND MISS FREEAR.



MR. LIONEL RIGNOLD AS MR. HONEYCOMB, AND MISS FREEAR.

Photographs by Hans, Strand.

LORD SHEFFIELD.



LORD SHEFFIELD.—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

No feature of the peerage is more remarkable than the absolute lack of inherited taste which seems to accompany inherited titles. The present Lord Sheffield, as everybody knows, is an enthusiastic cricketer, and is about to entertain the Australian team, which has come again to meet the Mother Country at the wicket. And yet it is little more than a century since the Lord Sheffield of that day played the patron to Edward Gibbon, and a humorist might suggest that there is really no such dissimilarity between the two peers, both having concerned themselves with Empire. The first did his best to assist the publication of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and the latter, by entertaining the Australian players, may be said to be cementing the bond of friendship with the Colony, and thus keeping Empire (British, in this case) from declining.

Sheffield Park is closely associated with the famous historian, for John Holroyd, first Lord Sheffield, was his intimate friend, and, although his death actually occurred in London, he was buried in the Sheffield mausoleum of Fletching Church under a characteristic inscription written by the famous Dr. Parr. In the mansion, which is of modern Gothic architecture, the apartments where Gibbon spent perhaps the busiest and happiest hours of his stormy life have been left much as they were in the time of the first Earl, and a fine portrait of the historian, painted by Reynolds for his own and his sitter's mutual friend, is far the finest counterfeit presentment of the adorer of M^{lle}. Curchod (Madame Necker). Certainly no man of letters ever had a more faithful and intelligently kind "patron." Lord Sheffield watched over him with incessant care during the last year of his life, and his friends were made as welcome as was himself at the beautiful country place now associated in the minds of many with the national game. By the way, Sheffield Park is one of the oldest estates in the United Kingdom, for it is on record that the land was at one time the property of Godwin, Earl of Kent, being, later, handed over by William the Conqueror to his own half-brother, the Earl of Cornwall. During the last thousand years Sheffield Park has constantly changed hands, becoming, in turn, the home of many distinguished families. One of the most curious and interesting features of the present mansion is a frieze, running round the house, in which are introduced the arms of all its various proprietors since, and, indeed, before, the Conquest.



SHEFFIELD PARK, SUSSEX.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. RUSSELL AND SONS, BAKER STREET, W.

THE LIGHT SIDE OF NATURE.



CRITIC : De bicture you haff bainted is most peautiful ; der is only von vordt in the English langweege vot describes eet, and I haff vorgotten eet.



JUST THE ARTICLE.

TOO CANDID BROTHER : I say, George, your picture of dignity is not forced enough. You want something doocid ridiculous and absurd behind the figure—to throw it out, you know.

ARTIST : Good idea, by Jove ! Sit where you are, Charlie, while I paint you in.



THE WIZARD.



AT THE ART SCHOOL EXHIBIT.

BUDDING GENIUS: Understand, this professes to be no more than a sketch—an impression. That is how I saw it.

PHILISTINE FRIEND: You saw it like *that*?

B. G.: Yes.

P. F. (after a pause): Well, you must have been screwed!

A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

TWO MEN AND A WOMAN.

BY GERARD HOWELL.

It was after the birth of their fourth son (they were all sons) that a change came about. Neither of them knew why; neither of them understood it; both of them regretted it. But there it was. How he loved her no one but himself could know. All the fondness with which he had conducted his courtship, his early marriage-days, the births of their four children—every moment of their married life, almost, was tintured with a wild sort of romantic passion that comes to but a very few of us in this unromantic world. And she, so faithful and kindly and winsome, so admiring and trustful—she, too, had tasted of the delights of human love during all these seven years. The change was all the more pitiable, then, to both. It was felt rather than spoken; it existed rather than revealed itself.

Of one thing he was quite certain: she was nerveless and weak, and, no doubt, this was due to physical causes following on the birth of the last baby. What could be done? Anything in this wide world to bring his old love back again. They were not rich, but they could afford some of the luxuries of life. They went to theatres and concerts; they attended, as of old, their social meetings and their political gatherings; but the life of old was gone out of all these things, and the world was dreary to both of them.

"My dear," said Frank Hyatt, as they sat in the study one cold, rainy night, "suppose you went abroad for a short time—I mean to Mentone, or somewhere on the Mediterranean. Don't you think that would do you good, make you yourself again, dear—your old, old self, Bertie?"

"Abroad—what, by myself? How do you suppose that can be managed? What's to become of the children and the house? How absurd to think of such a thing!"

She spoke in a querulous sort of voice, and did not open her eyes, as she lay back in the chair in front of the fire.

"Well, my dear," he pursued confidently, "it isn't so absurd as you suppose. I got a cheque for my book this morning, and that would more than suffice to pay expenses. Bertie, dear," he added, leaning forward, and taking her hand, "I can't stand this continued indifference of us both to the old life and the old love. It will kill me or change me. I want to get rid of it if I can. Now, don't you think that a change of this sort will do you good, make you my old darling once again, and make us both happy. You want rest and change, dear."

The two talked on of this plan far into the night, but they retired happier and more like themselves than they had been for the last four months. And it was arranged as he had planned. She would go for a short time, at all events.

He could only see her as far as Paris, as he had important work to perform, and he left her in the train, on its way to the bright shores of the Mediterranean.

Bertha Hyatt soon reaped all the benefit of the change. The old kind of elasticity came back to her. She grew stouter and more robust almost day by day, as she drank in the quiet beauties of a perfectly blue sea, a dazzling sun, even though it was only March, grand country, and freedom. Freedom; ah! there was the talisman; she said over and over again to herself.

At first there was little or no society for her. There were women who would not be friends with one so serious and so advanced in all sorts of radical opinions as Bertha Hyatt—the wife of that dreadful man, the author of "Social Wrongs," as they whispered; there were men who lived for the trivialities of life, and these were not for Bertha Hyatt to find much company with. After a fortnight of nearly unbroken solitude, she was longing for some of the old love, some taste of human affection. She thought of her husband and their days of old, and she longed for some return of that. She did not want her freedom any longer.

It was while in this mood that Willoughby Dixon came upon the scene. There are few men like him. Wealthy, happy, frank of disposition, handsome of person, he was in all things a man. From the first he was attracted by Mrs. Hyatt. The other ladies were well enough in their way, but Mrs. Hyatt was capable of thinking and talking in a manner they could not. For she was a beautiful woman now that she was regaining her old personality, and she was writing home a laughing account of her ridiculous improvement in health, and how she should like to wait for the Carnival ball, and how nice it would be if Frank could only come over for that event. And Frank Hyatt thanked God it was so, and looked to the time of once more clasping her in his arms in the old, old fashion. No, he could not come for the ball, but, of course, she could go. A costume need not cost much, and it was a sight well worth the waiting for.

At first it was only occasionally that Mrs. Hyatt and Dixon found themselves together. They once or twice went to see some antiquities which were quite near, to visit the prehistoric caves, the old castle, to see the view from the top of the hill, for Mrs. Hyatt had not much money to spend in excursions. Then he asked her to accompany him on more distant expeditions, driving for the most part, and, though at

first she timidly refused, he was so really sincere in his entreaties that she should come and teach him the value of all these signs of ancient times, that she went more and more frequently, until scarcely a day passed without the two seeing something of each other.

God knows how it all came about. They were standing—these two of God's creatures, man and woman—on the top of the grand hill overlooking the bay. She was half-leaning against the cromlech they had come specially to see, and the wind was blowing in her face—blowing her dress to her form, and revealing the outlined figure of a lovely woman; and he was standing at her side, half-mad with a blood-curdling tremor that almost benumbed him. They had been talking of the problems of the day; they had been exchanging some thoughts which perhaps had better not be exchanged, and both knew, she as well as he, that a quicker pulse had announced to each that the brink they stood on was not only the brink of this hill-top.

"Bertha," he said suddenly, "is not this grand? I shall remember it to my dying day."

She noticed the "Bertha" which had replaced the hitherto formal "Mrs. Hyatt," but she could not repel it at that moment.

"Will you not speak to me?" he went on, more calmly, but not less impassioned. "Just one word; say that I may call you so, say that I have not offended you by loving you. Darling, speak to me, look at me! You say you are going away to-morrow, going back home again, and yet you will not speak."

She turned to him an appealing face, and in a moment he was by her side. He folded her in his arms, and kissed her again and again and again, and, when at last she said simply that she must go back, the two walked together down the road they had come up, but with no word between them. Was there not something more than words?

On reaching her rooms Mrs. Hyatt sat and thought it all out. How wicked, commonplace, and immoral it all was! She, a strong-minded woman of the new ideas, to let such a thing happen—such a thing! And yet here she was alone and all but weary of the world, until Willoughby Dixon came to her, and literally brought her back to her world—not his, no; not his world—made her yearn for the love she had left in London these four weeks ago, the love that had come to her in her first girl's passion, the love that made life worth the living. Yes, my dear Frank! mused she; I will write to-night and tell you of my coming home, and I will not stop for the Carnival.

At this moment Willoughby Dixon passed the open window, and begged to be allowed to come in, as usual, for his afternoon tea. "And I want to do so for two reasons," he said, "to beg your forgiveness and to ask you to go to the Carnival ball to-morrow night."

No, she could not go the ball; she had no dress suitable. But that was just the very point he had come to speak about. He had heard her say that she could not procure a suitable costume, and now an accident had given him the chance of helping her. He knew how much she wished to go. He had been expecting his sister to come, and had, at her commands, had a dress made specially for her. Now, he had just heard that she could not come. She had been taken ill at Florence, and had telegraphed that afternoon. His sister was much the same height as Mrs. Hyatt; it was a ball worth seeing on account of its quaint archaic ceremonials; thousands came over specially to attend it. Would not Mrs. Hyatt take advantage of this chance, and let him send the dress round by the costume-maker, and have it altered? Ah, well! his pleadings were not in vain at last. There was really no reason why she should not see this ball, at all events, and then she would start for home, according to her original plan.

The dress was a magnificent one. It wanted but very slight alteration, and the costume-maker explained that Miss Dixon had only sent her measurements and an old dress to fit by, so the work had not been completed until the final trying-on. It was the dress of a peasant-girl, but made in the most costly instead of the most simple stuffs; but its exquisite beauty showed off the rounded shape of Mrs. Hyatt to perfection.

The arrangement was that a carriage would call for her, and that Mr. Dixon was to meet her at the entrance. He was there, in the costume of a peasant correspondingly made to his sister's dress.

"You forgive me?" he whispered, as they entered the grand hall.

"I suppose so," was the answer, "inasmuch as I am here."

And so the wild delights began. Where does love triumph more strongly than in the dance? And that was, above all, a wild, delightful night. Everyone felt it so. For once it seemed as if human beings had decided to think of nothing but their happiness for the moment, to abandon the trammels of thought and of custom and to be human beings once more. A veritable carnival, truly. Mrs. Hyatt sat watching the early part of it with a wild admiration for the unadulterated enjoyment which possessed everyone: she pictured to herself what life might be if human beings would only let it be; she idealised a Utopia where happiness only was to reign, and she sighed at the gulf between this and reality. But there was not much time for solitary dreaming. Dixon by no means monopolised her. Everyone seemed determined to please everyone else, and there was light in the glad eyes of beautiful women—for were they not all beautiful here, whatever their features?—and there was an echo in the glad hearts of men.

"I will see you home, dear," he said, as she wrapped her light cloak around her and stepped into the carriage he had procured.

The drive was not a long one. All in the house were tired out and asleep when they arrived, and the ring was for a time disregarded. At last one of the children tripped down and opened the door, only to rapidly go back again upstairs, leaving these two, warm from the delights of that last evening of theirs, standing on the threshold.

They stood talking some time, telling each other that there was no reason to forget, even if they had to turn their thoughts into new channels for the future, saying those things which cannot be unsaid, dipping into life so deeply that they failed to see the depth.

"My darling!" at length he whispered, bending low down to her, "let me come in for one moment, for one kiss more, for one more gentle pressure of those arms, for one more thought of eternal bliss—do, do let me!"

"No, no! not that, not that, Willoughby! Be contented with what has happened. Think of me kindly always, and I see no harm in thinking of you too. It will be but thoughts, as time fades the reality into distance."

"But why not?" he persisted, as his passion rose; "why not? I swear to you I cannot leave you like this. I shall yearn so after you that I shall follow you. You must let me know once more that your lips are lips of love; you must, Bertie, indeed you must!"

They stood on the door-lintel, and she gradually, oh, so gradually, yielded, as he passed his arm round her and led her inwards. At last his hand was on the door of her room, and for a moment both stood breathless. The next moment they were standing clasped together, she desperately enclosed in his strong arms, desperately receiving his rapturous kisses. Ah! What then under the canopy of that March night? It was a whirl of passionate love, fateful to both, and when at last he tore himself away, the sun had long since risen, and he looked down upon her with the sunlight in her eyes, and a dead weight creeping up into her heart as he, for the last time, kissed her, and almost fled away from the love he had awakened—and closed.

No, she could not, would not, write to Frank now. She would wear out her life, her dishonour, by herself. And yet, why talk like this? Was not Frank all the world to her? Had he not sworn often and often that she could love whom she would as long as she did not cease to love him? But then men were so changeable. They said these kind of things and did not mean them. No, she would never see Willoughby Dixon again, of that she was quite resolved. She never had since that dreadful night, now a week ago. And now her worst fears had come true. Frank was urging her to return, begging her to say why she stayed, talked of coming over to fetch her, and she was staying away with that dread secret at her heart. Secret! no, it should be no secret! Frank was her true, noble lover-husband; Frank would not spurn her—and yet all men spurned their unfaithful wives, all men trembled at the loss of their love's honour; and Frank would too—of course he would! of course he would! of course he would! And her boys—great heavens! What ought she to do? What could she do?

Thus the story went on working out its own end. Willoughby Dixon was pained and heartbroken, but she would not see him. At last the flash of reason took its place in all this chaos of conflicting thought, and Bertha Hyatt sat down and wrote her story—wrote with such burning words that at the moment when the last syllable was penned, the pet name that Frank had always used, the pent-up tears flowed down upon the task, and her heart was near to breaking.

Then came the waiting for reply—that dreary, dreadful waiting. On the morning of the third day the reply came, in the shape of a telegram, and Bertha blessed the paper that she crumpled in her hand so desperately—blessed it, and thanked God for it. But she could not open it. That it contained deliverance she was sure; that it was her own dear Frank's assurance of continued love she knew; but she dare not read it—no, she dare not, she dare not. For the first time during this fateful week she went out. She must breathe the open air. She walked, and walked, and walked, that crushed paper still with her and unread. What did it contain? Ah! what were the words? What did he say? As she struggled along, tired out, she at last came to a spot opening out on to the blue sea beyond. Peace, peace, and rest were there, and she sank down and buried her face in her hands. Yes, she could read it now. Ah! what was it? Did her eyes betray her? Was she in her right senses? Yes, she was surely sane, for there on that crumpled-up paper were the words of love—

Of course, come home. I am coming to fetch you, darling. Be trustful, and remember that I want you always.

Well, he came. She did not meet him at the station. That could not be. But she met him as he crossed the doorway, and they twain were once more together. Years have gone by, and the old, old life has returned, and that sacred secret has made man and woman of them—man as he is if social forces would only let him act, woman as she is if she could only know the truth about man's love and her own.

"The Green Graves of Balgowrie," by Jane H. Findlater (Methuen), is not a kail-yard book. It is true the scene is laid in Scotland, but the local colour is not in excess, and of dialect we have practically nothing at all. There is a measure of originality about the story, which turns on the sad fate of two girls bereft of their father, isolated and repressed by a practically insane mother, rescued in some measure by a minister without belief, but not without heart, and both of them dying at last of consumption. Miss Findlater is not a cheerful writer, but her book is not painful, and it shows very considerable talent and promise.

HORS D'ŒUVRES.

So the expected has happened—or rather, the unexpected has *not* happened. President Krüger is not coming to England, and few persons are especially surprised or disappointed. After all, the main question is not whether the old Dopper is coming or not, but what he means to do here or yonder. Does he mean to redress the most crying grievances of the Uitlanders, and let other matters continue as they are? Does he mean to refuse redress, and oppress the strangers who provide his revenue till he practically confiscates their wealth? Or is he planning a further and bolder move, and aiming at ousting the Imperial factor altogether, and forming a Dutch-German federation in South Africa?

Not a few symptoms would seem to point to the last conclusion. Allowing for exaggeration, there seems to be much military activity among the Boers, building of forts, importing of arms and munitions, and of German colonists with military training. Against whom, and with what intent? There can be no fear of the Chartered Company now; that body at no time possessed force enough to cope with the Boers, and is now finding enough work and to spare in subduing its own revolted subjects. The English troops in South Africa are dangerously few, even for times of peace, and the reinforcements now on their way are barely adequate to cope with the Matabele, as Mr. Chamberlain has somewhat superfluously explained. Why, then, this arming on the part of the Boers? If our Radical papers were as suspicious of Mr. Krüger as they are of their own country, they would long ago have announced as an undoubted fact that the South African Republic, whether with or without German help, is planning a general attack on the predominant Power in South Africa, and intends to wipe out the red colour from the map, south of the Zambesi.

Yet it does not seem probable that such is Oom Paul's design. He is an old man, and would probably prefer to go down to the grave in peace. He has seen England, and knows that there are more soldiers there than the few hundreds beaten at Majuba. He may possibly know that there is a large and efficient army in India, whose officers and men would like nothing better than a chance of something approaching civilised warfare. He may even have an inkling that, while a hundred Boers would probably demolish a hundred of any regular army in the world, a disciplined army corps, in the open field, could render a very good account of its own number of irregular skirmishers, however well they shot. And, putting these considerations together, it would seem likely that President Krüger is merely allowing the warlike zeal of his burghers to blow itself off in warlike preparations, which he hopes will never be wanted, and severe sentences which he means to commute.

For the rest, it is probable that Mr. Krüger wants matters to last his time. Even the monstrous sentences passed on the "Reform Committee" prisoners are generally thought to be meant to give opportunity for a cheap clemency, to be made dear (if possible) to our Government. It is probable that this crisis will pass, as others have done, without bloodshed. If only some tolerable amount of concession can be won for our citizens in the Transvaal, if only the scheming Hollander and German elements can be thwarted and kept down, if only the Imperial forces in South Africa can be gradually increased to an amount sufficient to warn off all intrusion or intrigue from abroad, the natural drift of the race may be trusted to settle the rest for itself. Great is the power of gold. Already the younger generation of Boers is becoming more civilised, and breaking away from the traditions of the unkempt farmers who had learnt, after the manner of the ancient Persians, to ride, to shoot with the rifle, and *not* to be too scrupulously accurate in keeping faith. The process, interrupted by the ill-judged aggression of one side and the sinister intrigues of the other, will be resumed in the near future. New wealth will create new wants.

Already, as the statistics of Krügersdorp tell us, Boer shooting is declining towards the standard of an ordinary army. Yet another twenty years, and their marksmen will have sunk into a militia, and any war with England will end in a Boomplaats instead of a Majuba. But another twenty years of peace should see such a war among the impossible things. The lesson of recent events is that it does not answer to rush things. The late Government came to great grief simply because it tried to rush things. The Chartered Company, as is evident now, rushed the Matabele, and did not really subdue them; its officers tried to rush the Transvaal question. Our good friends the French wanted to rush us out of Egypt, with what result, for the time, is evident. Slow and sure is a good maxim for diplomacy, if a bad one for war. And even in war, the stolid and deliberate combatant often comes out ahead, if he be sensible as well as stolid.

Our journalist amateur diplomatists are the worst offenders in the way of hurry. They settle the affairs of the world in a column of distracted jargon, and feel indignant if their suggestions are not adopted in time for next day's issue. Be patient, O ye eager scribes! The Millennium, which will last some time, may well be some time in coming; and if we were to settle all our troubles off-hand, what topic would be left for your small talk, or even Smalley talk?

MARMITON.

THE WORLD OF SPORT.

CRICKET.

Before my next budget appears, the Australians, who have, as all the world knows, "come," will have "seen." Whether the third phase of the well-known saying will be borne out is a contingency which we may set out to discuss. Personally, I shall be very sorry if the Australians do not win their first match, which begins at Lord Sheffield's park on Monday next.

I may be wrong in my view; I may be taking an exaggerated view of the effect an early defeat is likely to have upon the present tour. Indeed, it can be urged that the last team, which came here in 1893, started off with a bad beating at the hands of Lord Sheffield's team, and yet finished up with a good record. I do not deny that, but then it must be remembered that we knew at the outset that Mr. Murdoch's side was a great one, and that it was bound to assert itself, no matter how badly it might start.

The present case is different. To a certain extent, Mr. Trott's team is being taken on trust. A side which does not find honour in its own country clearly cannot expect us to have faith in them until they do something which shall compel our admiration. Australian critics, even the great "Felix," have publicly stated that the ninth Australian team which is over here cannot be regarded as the best representatives available. With this view Englishmen have been eager to coincide, having regard to the absence of C. T. B. Turner and A. E. Trott, for, although the latter is here and willing to assist, he cannot be reckoned as an "official" member of the team.

I do not wish to go over old ground again, especially as it is rather unpleasant, but I must admit that I hold grave doubts as to the efficiency of the Australian bowlers. I do not speak from hearsay and from figures merely—I never did attach much importance to cricket statistics, because they are dependent upon so many circumstances—but I have seen the Colonial trundlers at work, and I have not been impressed. When I say that I expect Giffen to be the most successful of them all, my views will be clearly understood. I do not imply any disrespect either to Giffen or the other bowlers. As a matter of fact, I consider George even now to be one of the cleverest bowlers of his kind. He may have improved since 1893—though that is, on the face of it, doubtful, seeing that he is getting well on in years—but it will be remembered that in that season he did not meet with more than ordinary success against our batsmen.

The fact is that a bowler of Giffen's style requires a good man or two with him—men who bowl at a faster pace, and who, of course, are able to take wickets. Now, between the style of Giffen and the styles of McKibbin, Trumble, and Harry Trott, I consider there is very little difference. To me Trumble does not seem to have altered the least bit, and Harry Trott strikes me as having deteriorated with the ball. McKibbin is undoubtedly the best-class man of the three. Indeed, it is quite likely that, with wickets to his liking, he may meet with great success. Well, let us all sincerely hope so. Of course, as Englishmen, we should not relish the defeat of England in the test matches. But, all the same, we should greet the Australians with hearty applause if they accomplished our downfall, partly because they are our own kinsmen, and partly because we are sportsmen first and "patriots" after.

Jones is regarded by the team as the leading bowler. He sends down a very fast ball, not unlike that of Mold, but, as it appears to me, rather less "pacey." I have not seen him do much in practice, but perhaps he is saving up all his form. Eady, a perfect specimen of athletic manhood, also bowls fast—not quite so fast as Jones, and with no more devil. As I say, the bowling strength of the present Australian team does not impress me yet; and I am of the firm belief that, if the wicket be hard and true at Sheffield Park on Monday next and following days, our trusty batsmen will not find great difficulty in scoring.

On the other hand, I should say that batting is the great strength of the Australians. However this first match go, I shall retain my belief that the side is one of the strongest in batting that has ever visited us. The merits of Graham, Gregory, Harry Trott, and Giffen over here are already proven. I do not think either of them has fallen off; probably they have all improved. With Iredale's style I am quite in love. He, I firmly believe, will be the great batsman on the side. Then there are the superb steadiness of Donnan, the brilliance—perhaps reckless brilliance—(on our wickets) of Darling, the dangerous hitting of reckless Clem Hill, and the good hitting of Eady and Kelly. Of course, all these men cannot be played in any one match—indeed, the Australians will still, I fancy, possess a "tail"—but sufficient has been written to show how strong the Colonials will be with the bat.

FOOTBALL.

The Llanelly F.C. have had a most remarkable season. Until a certain point—Feb. 1, to be precise—their success could not have been more brilliant. On that ill-fated day, Newport blasted their unbeaten record—as they did the records of Blackheath, Cambridge, and other clubs—and from then Llanelly, for a time, seemed to go all to pieces.

Of the first twenty matches, eighteen had been won and two drawn. Of the last eleven fixtures, four were won, five lost, and two drawn. Nevertheless, the club cannot complain of the season's work, seeing that the full record was 313 points for and 59 against. Cliff Bowen,

the captain, was the chief try-getter, with 17, Evan Lloyd followed with 13, Ben Davies with 12, and W. J. Thomas with 7. Llanelly have a very smart team, but they are no more able than other clubs to fight against adversity. They had cruel luck last season.

GOLFING.

The Morris County Golf Club at New Jersey will not suffer from lack of enthusiasm. They have just purchased 185 acres of ground near the club-house, for which they paid no less than £14,000. Clearly, golf is waking up in New Jersey.

I understand that golf-links have already been established near Bruges. It is, of course, difficult in Belgium to hit upon land which is not cultivated by spade or plough, and so the authorities have to rest content with a modest green.

More new golf clubs. The latest is situate at Helen's Bay, in the North of Ireland. The patron of the club is Lord Dufferin, Major Sharman Crawford is the president, and Mr. G. H. Brown is the captain.

OLYMPIAN.

RACING NOTES BY CAPTAIN COE.

I for one do not despair of seeing an interesting race for the Derby. True, the race looks good on paper for St. Frusquin, and followers of winning form, to be consistent, must support Mr. L. de Rothschild's colt. But the Guineas showed us plenty of horses that were very far from fit, and it is fair to assume that they will run better later on. John Porter did the right thing in letting Regret miss his Two Thousand engagement, as did Marsh in the case of Persimmon. Both colts can be made pounds better before the Epsom race is run, as recent gallops prove them to be far from fit. I think Regret is sure to reproduce his two-year-old form, which was very smart. I am still of opinion that Teufel will get a place for the Derby.

The backers have had the better of the ring lately, and several layers who were short of capital have been unable to continue business. A leading bookmaker told me the other day that the cutting trade has shaken the ring terribly, and the professional layer of to-day gets no advantage over the professional backer in the matter of figures, while both really get their living out of the green young men who gamble without rhyme or reason; and whereas the professional backer seldom makes a bad debt, the layers have to give credit to the tune of thousands in the course of a season, and bad debts follow as a matter of course.

Now that Mr. John Porter has written a book, I wonder someone does not approach Mr. Matthew Dawson with a view to getting him to pen his experiences. I think, however, the most interesting work for racegoers would be a book compiled by Robert Moody, the champion ring-keeper. He might tell us of the "wrong 'uns" he has had to deal with; also of the rows on the course, the catching of welshers, and of his manner of dealing with the deadheads. Moody could, I am sure, furnish the data for an interesting volume, for he is a man who knows more racegoers' faces than anyone else. Here, then, is a chance for some enterprising young journalist with plenty of time and ability.

Mr. S. H. Hyde, who manages the course at Kempton, is making arrangements for a largest attendance on record on Jubilee Stakes day. I am glad to notice that the directors of this company display an enterprise which is appreciated by the racing public. It is, by-the-by, amusing at this time of day to turn back and read what some of the sporting writers said of the Jubilee Stakes when it was started in honour of her Majesty's Jubilee. One well-known scribe thought the idea a stupid one, and predicted the speedy failure of the race. Another said the bookmakers would never start ante-post betting on the event. As a matter of fact, the Jubilee Stakes is now one of the most popular of the Spring Handicaps.

There will be a big field of good horses go to the post for the Jubilee Stakes, and it will be interesting to watch the battle-royal between Clorane and Victor Wild. It was the victory of the latter in this race last year that "broke" 75 per cent. of the pavement bookies in London, who expected to have to pay out at the most five to two, whereas the starting price of Victor Wild was returned at twenty to one. I have no doubt Mr. Worton's horse will run very well again, but I am of the opinion that Clorane will beat him, as my information is to the effect that Clorane won at Ascot cleverly, and the head verdict of the judge was easily gained.

The police authorities are very active just now in prosecuting the proprietors and managers of certain alleged betting-clubs, but it is passing strange that the authorities have never attacked some of the so-called "bucket-shops" that are used for gambling on racing. The bookmakers, who are not allowed to run clubs, complain that their business should be taken from them by the keepers of some of the so-called "bucket-shops," who, they allege, lay 'em S. P. without let or hindrance. Of course, if one or two big bookmakers started business as bucket-men, they might be left alone. Perhaps not.

PARLIAMENT.

BY "A RASH RADICAL."

There has been a curious encounter, or series of encounters, between two figures well known in the House of Commons, though one is no longer a member, Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Shaw Lefevre. Mr. Lefevre made a series of reflections on Mr. Chaplin and the Agricultural Commission, which that gentleman hotly resented in the House, using language which, had the House of Commons been the French Chamber, and Mr. Shaw Lefevre, instead of being a rather phlegmatic and sad-faced Englishman, been a fiery Gaul, would have led to pistols and coffee for two. But, somehow, Mr. Chaplin's rhetorical thrusts do not cut deep. There is a good deal of heavy broadsword play, but not much bloodshed. It was much the same in the old days, when Mr. Chaplin set himself the odd task of "downing" Mr. Gladstone. The one man in the House who took these assaults of Mr. Chaplin seriously was their distinguished victim. Everybody else was amused. Mr. Chaplin, however, is now a great Ministerial personage, and, therefore, no fit subject for laughter. He has enjoyed himself over the Rating Bill, which, if it has not given him the opportunity of displaying the highest kind of Parliamentary talent, has enabled him to pose as an agricultural Ajax defying distress.

THE GOVERNMENT BILLS.

Certainly the Government are not doing well. In the first place, their Bills are not prospering. The Rent Relief Bill has, as I have said, been riddled. No one of its defenders has shown a tithe of the knowledge of the rating question displayed by Sir Henry Fowler, who, whatever may be his deficiencies in other respects, is an unequalled master of the details of local finance. Mr. Balfour is no good to his Party in an encounter of this character. He is not strong in details, and his management of the House of Commons is more than a little slack and inefficient. After all, even a Ministry with a majority of 150 wants something more than a charming and clever dilettante at its head. Moreover, what has happened to the Rating Bill may also happen to the Education Bill, to say nothing of the Water Trust Bill, which is practically dead. If the Government have been obliged to put a time-limit to their rating proposals, what are they likely to be compelled to do over a measure which creates such a revolution in local government and popular education as Sir John Gorst's measure? Already their friends are turning upon them—witness Mr. Diggle's attitude in the London School Board. The Bill is immensely complex, will hardly get through this Session even with a smooth and regular passage through Committee—which it is certain not to secure—and is distasteful to the Unionists.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

Mention of Mr. Chamberlain's name leads me to another reflection. Mr. Chamberlain is not doing well. He has now suffered the inevitable repulse at President Krüger's hands which everybody anticipated must be his lot. The wily old Dutchman is not coming to England. Those who have been behind the scenes have long ago given up the hope that he would. Mr. Chamberlain went too fast and too far. His sharp, quick tongue has given offence; his impulsive diplomacy has rather overreached itself. I confess I am sorry for this. Mr. Chamberlain has done well in this South African business, and he meant still better. But he has wanted experience, tact, reserve, patience. I am a great believer in the new diplomacy, but, like other excellent methods, it has its limits. Mr. Chamberlain should not make proposals to a Power until he has some idea that they will be accepted, and he should not issue invitations which are likely to be refused. I am told that, sensitive man as he is, he feels his rebuff acutely. I sympathise with him, and hope that he will recover the prestige he has lost. After all, he saved us from the Jameson raid, and from complicity in that miserable and disgraceful business.

SUCCESS OF THE OPPOSITION.

On the other hand, the Liberals, though their internal feuds are not healed, and though the front Opposition Bench is not strong, have gained of late, at all events, in confidence and belief in the future possibilities of their Party. Lord Rosebery in particular has improved a good deal. His Education speech at Rochdale was good, and his attack on the Government's Water Bill was better still. I believe that there is no doubt he intends to maintain his position, a task in which, if Sir William Harcourt were ten years younger, he might not succeed, but which, as things stand, offers no insurmountable difficulties. That he is not an ideal statesman everyone admits, but there is some sign that he is giving himself a good, hard apprenticeship in politics, and is putting his back into his work. That, at all events, is the impression of the hour, which is all that I can record in this column. He has recovered his health, which broke down under the strain of the Premiership.

Meanwhile, the air has been a trifle disturbed by the rumour of changes in the conduct of the Government. That Lord Salisbury should retire at this moment, giving place to Mr. Balfour as Prime Minister, with a seat in the Peers', and leaving Mr. Chamberlain to lead the House, is more than I can credit. Such an arrangement would dislocate the Session, already sufficiently out of joint. Besides, it would be intensely unpopular among the Tories, who would not, I believe, submit—at least, in their present mood—to be led by the member for West Birmingham. Lord Salisbury's health is never very strong, and I confess I have always my doubts as to whether he will see this Government through; but at present it would be madness to topsy-turvy the entire make-up of a machine which does not show quite as much stability as was expected of it.

PARLIAMENT.

BY "A CAUTIOUS CONSERVATIVE."

There is to be an element of the unexpected about the fates of the three principal Government Bills. While the Rating Bill has prospered exceedingly, the discussion on the Education Bill promises to be not merely lengthy, but critical; and at present it seems doubtful if the Irish Land Bill, which was at one time thought to be the only urgent piece of legislation due from the Government, will have a "look in" at all. There is trouble ahead over the Education Bill, unless the Government are very careful. As I have pointed out before, the proposal to hand over education to the County Councils is not a Conservative idea at all. It is a Chamberlain and Birmingham idea, and it grows more distasteful to many Conservatives every day. Mr. Diggle, on behalf of the London School Board, declares that the Bill cannot work in London, and would be intolerable if it could, and he demands special terms for the Metropolis. When the Bill comes up for discussion, a good deal of Conservative criticism will go in the same direction. Mr. Diggle is a Conservative and a Denominationalist, but it is no part of the policy of Conservatism to smash the central education department, and to hand over the control of education to local bodies elected on anything but educational grounds, and generally composed of faddists whose hands are already far too full.

THE RATING BILL.

The division on Thursday night, or rather, Friday morning, was a tremendous blow to the Radicals who had prophesied a smashing for the Rating Bill. A majority of 177 on a Bill which alone in the Government programme seemed to unite all sections of the Opposition against it, shows how ridiculous was the pretence of Sir William Harcourt that not enough time was given to the consideration of the second reading. Mr. Chaplin was induced to make one concession to the critics, and submitted to a time-limit for the Bill, so that it only applies for five years. But this was a mere detail. The Opposition was smitten hip and thigh, and in Committee will have to sing small.

UNIONIST OPPOSITION AND RADICAL SUPPORT.

Mr. G. C. Whiteley, one of the two Conservative members for Stockport, distinguished himself by an impassioned harangue against the Rating Bill. The "rating" was, in fact, all on his side. But, on the other hand, the Radical Mr. Perks, a county member, was equally warm in supporting the Bill. Undoubtedly the preference of "country" to "town" in the bounty conferred by this Bill was calculated to cause unpleasantness to Unionist urban members, and Mr. Whiteley was entitled to vote as he pleased. But it seems to me that such a view is exceedingly narrow. The depression in agriculture cannot be alleviated, even in a small degree, without relaxing the pressure on urban industries caused by the influx of the rural population into the towns. Mr. Perks's confession that in Lincolnshire the small owners who farm their own land will greatly benefit by the Bill may be set against the usual argument of his Radical friends (mostly urban members since last year's anti-Radical wave in the counties), that the money will only go into the pocket of the landlords. As for Mr. Whiteley's challenge to Mr. Balfour, it was really a little too farcical. Mr. Whiteley worked himself up into suggesting that Mr. Balfour and he should both resign their seats and stand again, so as to take the opinion of the Lancashire voters as to whether the Bill was popular there. Lancashire voters, I regret to say, have recently shown themselves exceedingly selfish, and have not scrupled to ask for preferential treatment at the cost of our subjects in India. But, in any event, the point is not whether Lancashire wants relief given to agriculture, but whether the Government must not be prepared to face some local hostility in doing justice to a single depressed industry. When it came to voting, Mr. Whiteley simply abstained from going into either lobby. But while the Government lost two or three Unionist votes in this way, they scored much more by the abstention of Radicals from the Opposition. Nine Radicals went so far as to vote for the Bill, and against their own leaders—Mr. Lambert, Mr. Price, Mr. F. W. Wilson, Mr. Perks, Mr. T. Owen, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Gold, Mr. Stevenson, and Mr. Luttrell. These Radical members, representing rural electors in Devonshire, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Essex, Suffolk, and Cornwall, know that their constituents would have kicked against opposition to the Bill.

SOUTH AFRICA IN THE HOUSE.

The news from South Africa has, of course, been far more interesting to members of Parliament than any question arising on the Rating Bill. We are face to face with real trouble now that the whole story, as affecting Mr. Rhodes and everybody, is coming out. It is not too much to say that a crisis is developing, as between Great Britain and the complex South African colony, only comparable to the state of things from which the American Secession arose; and everything depends upon what may happen in the next year or so. The formation of a South African Association during the last week, with a committee formed almost exclusively of M.P.'s, shows how strongly it is felt here that everything possible should be known about the situation, and followed up day by day. Mr. Chamberlain's position is undeniably one of the most difficult ever occupied by a British statesman; but he is playing, as it seems at present, entirely the right game. It will be from the conduct by the Ministry of the South African business, far more than by their domestic legislation, that the country will judge them. The great thing is that Parliament is ready to back them up to any extent. What might not be happening now if a weak Liberal Cabinet, depending upon the votes of half-a-dozen ignorant fanatics, were in office?

SOCIETY ON WHEELS.

Cycling is no respecter of race. Here is a Maori hailing from Kaiapoi, about fifteen miles from Christchurch, New Zealand. His name is Harry Whakatau Uru. He is a stalwart young fellow of twenty-four



A MAORI WHEELMAN.

Photo by Standish and Preece, Christchurch, New Zealand.

years of age, six feet one inch in height, and weighs fifteen stone. He and his two elder brothers are all famous athletes as pedestrians, wrestlers, footballers, and cyclists, and their only sister is a graceful and accomplished wheelwoman. He is married, and his wife is also a rider. He started to ride in 1887, and in 1889 won the Two-Mile Maori Race, his brother Hape being second. Deciding to take to the racing-path, and electing to ride as a "cash" amateur, he this season joined the ranks of the Christchurch Cycling Club, to which he is a decided acquisition, and so far he has been fairly successful. The machine ridden by Mr. Uru was specially built to his order by Messrs. Waller, Myhre,

and Co., of Christchurch. He is also a splendid footballer, having been included in the celebrated Maori team which carried all before it throughout the Colony last year. He is a farmer, but most of his land is leased to Europeans. A good number of the Kaiapoi natives have followed Uru's example, and there are several machines in the Pah. He himself has taught a good many of the natives to ride.

Travelling from London to Dublin lately, I talked with a stranger who proved to be the chief director of a railway company. Concerning cycles, he declared that, if "the rage for those things" continued to increase, it would become absolutely necessary to make special arrangements and terms for their transit. Already, he said, railway officials were often put to great inconvenience by thoughtless passengers, who seemed to think that their particular bicycles were the only machines needing care and attention. "Look," he continued, pointing to a row of eight or ten bicycles standing on the Crewe platform, "those machines are most likely going together in one van, and accommodation for them must be found no matter how much ordinary luggage the train has to convey. A fall or a slight blow may injure some of those bicycles, and then the owners will for certain try to obtain compensation on the ground of porters' carelessness. I tell you this bicycle mania is a perfect nuisance."

It was in Ireland that a few years ago some up-to-date young ladies, fond of sport, started a ladies' polo club. It proved a failure. Let us hope that the energetic young men now striving to play polo on bicycles in that delightful country will not, as the Irish reporter said, "leave a brilliant future behind them." No fixed code of rules has yet been drawn up, but three players a-side are considered a sufficient number. The game should be played on firm, closely cropped turf; the larger the area the better. Of course, only expert cyclists should attempt to play polo on wheels, a complete mastery over the machine being a *sine qua non*. A fairly light road-racer is recommended, and a hockey in preference to a polo ball.

In the near future the knickerbocker will undoubtedly oust the skirt for cycling purposes. Most of our leading lady riders say so, and they well know the temperature of the pulse of public opinion. After all, it is only public opinion that really regulates such matters, and at last public opinion is coming round to knickerbockers. Lady Colin Campbell is among the warmest advocates of the knickerbocker for lady cyclists. At the best of times a skirt is a tiresome garment to wear for

bicycling, and in a high wind the skirted rider is sadly handicapped; often, she must dismount. Fifty years ago, ladies would have looked with horror upon the short hunting-skirt of to-day. Five years ago, fond mothers of prim daughters blushed at "the bare idea, my dear!" of young ladies being seen on bicycles. Last season they let their daughters ride bicycles, because cycling had become fashionable, and because public opinion had changed, but, even then, the knickerbocker was "not to be thought of." When the London season of 1897 comes round, the knickerbocker will be thought of—and worn.

Nowhere in Ireland is the wheel more popular than in Limerick. Every morning and evening Garryowen is crowded with fair riders, of whom the majority look very dainty in their neat, becoming costumes. They have such excellent taste, these Irish "colleens." Indeed, so great are their attractions that man, selfish man, has deigned to put himself to inconvenience in order to secure the pleasure of their society. At a recent meeting of the Protestant Young Men's Cycling Club, a resolution was passed to the effect that "all lady friends of the members who are cyclists be invited to attend the weekly runs of the club, a moderate pace and distance having been arranged for the convenience of the lady cyclists." What would Miss Edith Lupton, who so delicately dubs men "a miserable set of curs," say to this?

In a previous number of *The Sketch* I alluded to elderly gentlemen and ladies who were smitten with the cycling mania. I would strongly recommend them to practise upon the "Bantam," a dwarf bicycle, more suited to their tender age, as, in case of accident, there is less distance to fall, and it is more easily mounted than those in ordinary use.

Since the cycle was adopted for military purposes (the Italians being first in the field in 1879) great advances have been made. Here is the latest invention—a duplex with a mountain-gun.



A DUPLEX WITH A MOUNTAIN-GUN.

Happening to be in Lancaster a few days ago, I called at Atkinson's. He keeps a great number of different sorts of bicycles, and, among other things, he showed me a Hewson's saddle, which he strongly recommended for ladies. It is larger than the ordinary saddle, and much more comfortable, being provided with two independent air-chambers. He told me that he had sold a Peregrine to Mrs. Foster, of Hornby Castle, who, like many others, has joined the noble army of cyclists.

We have many enthusiastic and daring wheelwomen, like the Duchess of Sutherland, Lady Eva Wellesley, Lady E. Villiers, Lady D. Elphinstone, Lady Van Notten-Pole, Lady Griffin, Lady Norreys, and Lady Warwick, but certainly one of the most daring and graceful riders is Princess Victoria. It is scarcely possible to speak of her riding as it deserves without bringing oneself under the accusation of toadyism. But of all the lady riders that I have seen, and I flatter myself I have seen a good many, and think I know a good rider when I see one, among them all there are none that come near her Royal Highness in style, power, and skill in riding the new steel horse.

I illustrate the ideal bicycle built for two. It was invented by a Canadian, Mr. A. S. Weaver, of Hamilton, Ontario, and is made by the Punnett Cycle Manufacturing Company, of Rochester, New York.

What in the world will be the end of the professional rider's salary? There is Michael (of course, as everyone knows, he is king among them) getting a bigger salary than the Prime Minister. I hear that Sir Augustus Harris pays him £150 a-week when he rides at Olympia, and that is quite irrespective of the large salary he gets from Mr. Simpson. What a pleasure it is to see this little Welshman ride—yes, ride mile after mile at an average of something less than two minutes per mile; or more than thirty miles an hour, yet doing it so easily, and in such an easy fashion, that he seems to be devoting more attention to the toothpick he always holds between his teeth while he is riding than to the terrible rate of speed at which he is flying round the track.

I wonder that no clever person has brought out a patent for a small sail, fastened on to the front of the bicycle; how easily it would glide along with the slightest breeze (without any exertion on the part of the rider) when travelling with the wind astern! The practical objection to this mode of propulsion appears to be the extra weight of the mast.



THE NEW SOCIABLE.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

Mr. Louis Becke's new South Sea Stories are easier reading than "By Reef and Palm," published last year in "The Autonym Library." Stevenson cast not undeserved reproaches at us in the "Vailima Letters" because we found it hard work to follow native South Sea dramas. But when Stevenson dealt with such matters, in tales, he helped us to an interest speedily, clearing the non-essential and the unfamiliar, which is not always the picturesque, out of the way. No such kindly office was done by Mr. Becke in his first collection. But he has gained literary skill since then, and in "The Ebbing of the Tide" (Unwin) and its companion tales we soon get acclimatised and attracted. In his brief narratives he stops now long enough to let us see the beauty by the way, to give us a longing to annex and settle down for ever on some of the favoured spots he describes—on Pingelap, for instance. There is more atmosphere about the stories; everything is not crowded into the foreground; and, though there is hardly less of the sordid, demoralised European element, the unspoilt native life is more detached and appreciable. Mr. Becke's memory or invention does not easily give out. He has the air of drawing on an inexhaustible fund, and, now that he is paying attention to design and ornament, he is probably to be put down on the list of our regular entertainers.

Mr. Harold Frederic has gone a little out of his way to amuse us in "Mrs. Albert Grundy." It is, at least, obliging of him, even if he is not exactly at his best in satirising modern fads and vulgarities. The society we are introduced to reminds us a good deal of that among which Mr. Bailey-Martin flourished, in his earlier days. It is a society that is easy to satirise, and has not been spared. Perhaps it was not worth while doing the thing again; but to say so is to take this trifle too seriously. Mrs. Albert is good material for *Punch* or the weekly satirists, and Mr. Frederic does not aim at anything more permanent in effect, though his publisher wraps up his light sketches of her in dainty binding. There is a family likeness between this gadabout lady and the staid matron of severe aspect who has long been the effectual bogey of the grown-up world. In fact, the younger woman carries on the traditions of the name as far as is compatible with the lively life which a mother of three marriageable daughters is bound to lead in these latter days. The satire is not up to the mark of some of the other volumes of the "Mayfair Set" (Lane)—not half so witty, nor so lastingly amusing, for instance, as George Fleming's "For Plain Women Only"—but it is very neat journalism, and Mr. Frederic scores creditably in a field which is not his own.

Dr. Greenhill did not live to finish his edition of Sir Thomas Browne, but much of the annotation for the "Hydriotaphia" had been done by him, and his labours have not been lost. The completion of the work fell to Mr. E. H. Marshall, and the book is now ready. Its publication in the "Golden Treasury Series," where space is necessarily limited, would in any case have forbidden much annotation of "The Garden of Cyrus," but it was also the opinion of Dr. Greenhill "that any attempt to collect a body of notes upon the zoological, botanical, and antiquarian subjects discussed would be a failure, owing to the difference of the scientific learning of the seventeenth century and of the nineteenth." Dr. Greenhill, learned enthusiast though he was, will, therefore, not be Browne's last editor, for the difference he speaks of is the main reason for notes, as it makes the chief interest of the text. But, in the meanwhile, the two small volumes form a delightful edition.

Mr. Grant Allen has given himself many opportunities of describing his favourite Surrey. Several of his recent novels open and run their course there. But whether the problem or the sensation to which each is devoted be too absorbing, the landscape background is mostly neutral in effect. In "Moorland Idylls" (Chatto), however, he has at last drawn excellent pictures of the Hindhead district. The heather, the sky, the birds, and beasts—all the natural configuration and peculiarities of the place—are the chief actors here; they make the story, and the impression of the open, breezy stretch of country is as broadly painted as the hidden life of the woods and hillsides is pleasantly suggested. You have only to be a very little of a poet and a very little of a naturalist—and most folks are both in some degree in the country—to enjoy the idylls.

A fine opportunity was given by the "Famous Scots Series" for a good monograph on Allan Ramsay, which should be at the same time a picture of Scottish literary life in the first half of the last century. He is not the kind of man to be pursued with much profit through the pages of a lengthy biography, but he affords picturesque and piquant material for a character-sketch. Not that the very best essay would add largely to the number of the readers of "The Gentle Shepherd," one of the many poems deservedly celebrated that are never read at all save by those who do not need encouragement or suggestion in their reading, an independent, stubborn little body that never die out, and seem never to show increase. But the opportunity has been missed. Perhaps one imagined a portrait of him that would have the effect of a character-part in a novel of Scott; and one may be, therefore, a little unfair to the conscientious but very unattractive account of the poet given by Mr. Oliphant Smeaton in the second volume of the series. The picture of the man is blurred, and that of the time incomplete. Of course, it would have wanted an artist to have done the thing to our satisfaction. It is fair, however, to say that the book is written in a fearsome style, Mr. Smeaton's knowledge of foreign tongues making a pattern of italics over the paper, and the usual Scotch vice of employing a big phrase when a little one would do being aggravated by a bad kind of journalese.

THE OPERA SEASON AT COVENT GARDEN.

In the old days of the Opera Prospectus the man in the street knew all about a season's programme weeks before the opening night. He could discuss everything with the ease and certainty peculiar to his species, and always had a foundation of fact for the most fictitious assertions. Nowadays nobody knows anything. Consequently, when I received instructions to discover plans and arrangements that were yet unborn (writes a *Sketch* representative), I had choice of three methods of procedure. The first and simplest was to write an article from the depths of my inner consciousness, and trust that Providence would bring about the verification of some of my statements; the second was to write round the subject instead of about it, and devote space to my *ego* and digestion after the method of certain dramatic critics; the third was to shadow Drury Lane at all hours, waylay Neil Forsyth—for Sir Augustus Harris was in Vienna—and collect facts.

To my credit, be it said, I chose the last-named course, spending long hours in the vestibule and foyer of Old Drury, hearing rehearsals and generally enjoying myself. Then Mr. Forsyth came to my assistance, and spared me some half-hour of his valuable time to tell me that the season would commence on May 11, and would last for eleven weeks, that the subscription was the largest on record, and that Druriolanus was away sampling new operas in general, and one, founded on Charles Dickens's "Cricket on the Hearth," in particular. He also told me that Madame Patti would not sing during the season, but that the brothers De Reszke would, and that nearly fifty singers were engaged, some twenty per cent. being English, a significant and interesting fact.

Then I heard that Sir Augustus would be back in town for the last Covent Garden Ball, and so this particular Saul went among the Philistines and had a good time, but could not catch Druriolanus. He was very much in evidence, but so many people wanted him that I could never get within interviewing distance. However, last week I was more fortunate, and found the Knight in the Lane, engaging singers, probably for the chorus; consulting his able lieutenants, Neil Forsyth and Arthur Collins; speaking several languages, and generally surpassing himself.

"Well, Sir Augustus," I said, "how about 'The Cricket on the Hearth' which took you all the way to Vienna? Is it going to be the sensation of your Covent Garden season?"

"Not in the least," he replied. "I was very disappointed. Nearly every character has been cut out or twisted beyond recognition; some people, entirely Austrian, have been introduced. The piece is no use to me, and I have not bought it."

"Did you procure anything new while you were away?" I asked, and Sir Augustus told me he had bought one new opera by an Austrian composer, and then, after briefly discussing the company engaged, he was called away to see another of the twenty-odd applicants for his time.

I have now seen the list of artists engaged, and heard something of the operas to be produced, and his enemies—if he has any—will acknowledge that Sir Augustus Harris is treating his subscribers and public with absolutely prodigal liberality. Money, time, and trouble have been freely expended all round, and it has not been a question of the principal first and the rest nowhere. On the contrary, Sir Augustus has secured admirable singers for the chorus, and good-looking ones to boot. The days or nights wherein the lady and gentleman of the chorus could only be described as *vox et præterea nihil* are past; at Covent Garden we shall see singers young, fair, and shapely in the useful but undistinguished capacities. And for this relief let us offer up a tribute of grateful praise.

The strength of the company is enormous, and seems almost unnecessarily great. The sopranos include Mesdames Melba, Albani, Calvé, Macintyre, Eames, and Fanny Moody; the contraltos, Mesdames Olitzka, Mantelli, Brazzi, and that useful artist Mlle. Brani, who, like Madame Bauermeister, can be relied on for anything at short notice. Among the tenors will be found Jean de Reszke, Alvarez, Bonnard, De Lucia, Ben Davies, and Rinaldini; among the baritones MM. David Bispham, Richard Green, Ancona, Albers, Pini-Corsi, and Gillibert. The basses are seven in number, and include Édouard de Reszke, Castelmary, Plançon, and Charles Manners. The conductors will be MM. Bevignani, Mancinelli, and Randegger; I wish I could add to the list everybody's friend and favourite, Luigi Arditi, whose eye is as true and beat as firm as ever.

Those who know anything about Italian operatic artists will know that the work is only commenced by their engagements. These nightingales will give Sir Augustus and his assistant-managers many an anxious hour, for, just as the smallest thing affects their voices, so will the tiniest trifle affect their susceptibilities. They have to be treated with a care and diplomacy that would give lessons to a statesman, or, at the very last moment, they will find themselves stricken with hoarseness, and unable to sing. Without undue flattery, it may be stated that Sir Augustus Harris is about the only man in England who can successfully control such a constellation of operatic stars, and that all modest men with less experience would shrink appalled from the task of producing so many operas in such short time.

Other men and various schemes of opposition have come before the public notice from time to time. There has been a preliminary flourish of trumpets, a considerable amount of speculative discussion, and long before the hour for action has been reached the scheme has been found dead as Queen Anne. This collapse of rivalry is solely due to the thoroughness with which Sir Augustus Harris makes his preparations, embracing every field of activity, catering for stationary and advanced tastes, and, in short, doing all that a clever man may to deserve the success which, we are told, no mortal can command.

OUR LADIES' PAGES.

FASHIONS AS THEY ARE.

The Jameson Hat, wide-brimmed, light—altogether Colonial, in fact—is the latest outcome of the Daily Event. More or less, fashion is ever sensitive to madresses of the moment, particularly if they possess the divine gift of adaptability, and may, by any device, be rendered



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becoming. Summer and wide brims, being naturally a simultaneous event, have evolved a crisis in the originating French mind, which resolves itself into the "Chapeau Jameson." To our shame be it admitted that we on the spot did not think of it first. Here it is, however, and a remarkably becoming adaptation of the genus Shady Brim too. I dare say we on this side of Seine will come to it in the autumn, in time for Henley ideas, perhaps. Meanwhile, smart women in Paris, where the cult is less occasional than ubiquitous, are everywhere appearing in "Le Jameson," as being at once appropriate to the season and the sentiment. With our present style of hairdressing—to wit, those soft, irresponsible waves which surely never owe their art to methylated spirits—this wide-brimmed sort of headgear is particularly becoming. How glad one is to think, by the way, that the "fringe" is at last relegated to such limbos of forgotten things as Brixton and Bloomsbury! The simulated simplicity of our present style is so much more difficult to imitate that it stands some chance of remaining in May-fair, while the "Nether World," so shudderingly described by George Gissing,

still disports its luxuriant locks in the abundant and overhanging "bang."

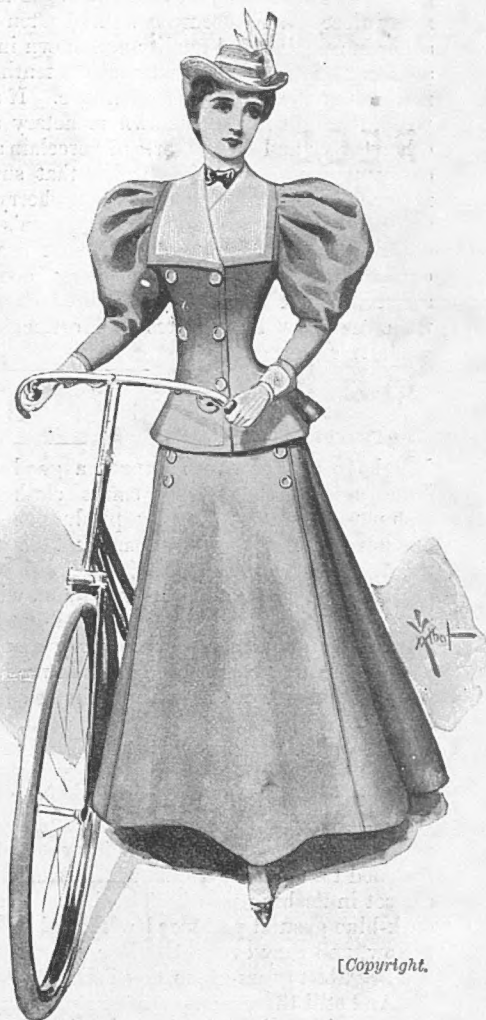
Two evenings since I came upon an evening-gown which realised a long-sought ideal for quite young girlhood. It was at a country house, twenty miles from town; the occasion, a "coming-out" dance, which my invitation—being a dine and sleep—made worthy of acceptance. With admirable tact, our hostess had put her daughter's blonde beauty, without any reservation, into the hands of a West-End genius, the result being a pale—very pale—blue satin, relieved with trails of apple-blossom and sleeves of painted chiffon. On the skirt, sprays of pink-and-white apple-blossom, with its accompanying short foliage of tender-green, were painted at both front and side seams, while across a simply folded bodice these orchard blooms repeated themselves seductively, and a bunch of the flower was fastened over the left shoulder, making a wonderful harmony with the white skin and blonde hair of its wearer. Several women wore long, crinkled sleeves of gauze or tulle at this festivity, I noticed—an innovation for evening wear which already obtains with the very fashionable, and will undoubtedly recommend itself quickly to the possessors of thin or red-skinned arms. And there really are a good many abroad, as frequenters of drawing-room teas, for instance, can affirm. Daylight is so pitiless and uncompromising to such little defects that the new mode of long sleeves for evening wear should have a large following shortly.

Nowadays, among the most important items of a fashionable woman's toilette may be reckoned her silk petticoats, for daily our luxurious tastes grow in this direction, and encompass, not alone the external, but the "altogether"—I thank thee, Du Maurier, for teaching me that word! Daily, therefore, does the fashionable dressmaker turn her thoughts to fresh extravagances of invention, until now it has become *de rigueur* to design a petticoat to go with our smartest costumes. Think of it, ye grandmamas, whose chiefest flight in this subterranean direction rarely soared beyond summer white cambric or wintry black silk, the latter quilted stoutly, for choice. In the classic Rue St. Honoré lives a genius in her way, whose inventive brain designs half the gorgeous lingerie and *déshabillés*—to be very colloquial—that are reproduced in the best London and Paris shops. One recent device is the uncreasable Corah silk petticoat, under an overskirt of muslin and insertion, which *mondaines* of generous dress-allowances are now greatly favouring. Pink taffetas, covered with accordion-pleated mousseline de soie, having rows of ivory-coloured Mechlin insertion, makes a gay ball-room petticoat, to be worn with a gown of shell-pink satin. Black satin flounced

with wide black lace, embroidered in white, and with rosettes of bébé ribbon in pink, green, and mauve, also affords an alluring companion to a gown of black satin, covered with painted chiffon in a large design of roses and lilac. Among dainty details of a recent trousseau prepared by Madame Humble, of Conduit Street, there was a matinée which combined in itself the beginning and end of loveliness. It was of white mousseline de soie, over a transparency of sky-blue silk, the bodice being blouse-shape, and made in alternate bands of mousseline de soie and Valenciennes insertion, edged with narrow lace to match, slightly gathered. This bodice was cut a little low at the neck, and trimmed round the *décolletée* with Valenciennes. Basques of the mousseline and insertion, gathered on each side, were edged with lace. Short balloon-shaped sleeves of pale-blue silk, painted with coloured roses, gave an unexpected and therefore charming effect. The skirt, of pale-blue silk, was covered with accordion-pleated mousseline and insertion to match. One rejoices that, among other revivals, crêpe de Chine is again declared immortal. No other material has its possibilities of drapery. I saw, for instance, a morning-gown of pale-pink China crape some days since in the breakfast-room of a fashionable friend. It was embroidered with bouquets of pink-tipped daisy-buds, and the shoulders were covered with a wide Antoinette fichu of silk muslin edged with real lace. Even the plainest woman could not dispense chocolate in such a creation unadmired. But my friend has a reputation both for her beauty and her breakfasts, and dresses accordingly. Meanwhile, from ocular demonstration, I can recommend pink crêpe for blondes up to 12 a.m. I hear, by the way, that it is to Princess Demidoff we are indebted for its reappearance, a lady who has the name of having one of the best-equipped wardrobes in Europe in all matters of lingerie and otherwise. The Princess of Monaco and Lady Warwick are not far behind, methinks, in these trifles of delicate detail, the former lady's comprehensive taste in matters of the toilette being already a proverb, while Lady Warwick's white-and-gold Bond Street shop contains miracles of stitchery, which owe their inception to a laudable desire on the part of its noble patroness to combine philanthropy with the ethereal, in as far as it will relate to cambric and the inscrutable potentialities of washing-lace.

The persistency with which this odious east wind continues its unwelcome attentions makes it impracticable to forswear tailor-mades altogether for the more seasonable seductions of silk and muslin. Not that this climate is one in which we are at any time quite emancipated from the practical uses of tweed and cheviot. Still, one pines to get away from realities occasionally, and tread the primrose-path of gay garments, with the result, however, of a bad chill very often, as punishment of the too-previous. "Till May is out ne'er cast a clout" is as wise a saying as it is inelegant, and will everlastingly apply to an English spring, with its chills and fervours and general contrariety.

Therefore, for morning wear, a tailor-made flannel I find excessively useful and smart. Benjamin, of Orchard Street, has a variety of the genus, striped, plain, and in every imaginable colour. A grey-blue seen there, having pin-stripes of darker shade, lined with red silk, and with collar and cuffs of white leather, made a good effect. He has the monopoly of a certain white cloth, admirable for boating- or walking-frocks; made up with collar and revers of black velours moiré, it is an engaging turn-out. Something between a serge and closely woven canvas is this white cloth. It drapes well, and is much to be preferred to the ordinary summer serge which haunts the reaches of old Isis on engaging damsels in punt or outrigger. In the notable coterie of tailors who can fit, Benjamin may reliably be included. A black costume, with tight-fitting, full-basqued coat, its fronts braided in fine gold cord,



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was a model of form, and bore the hall-mark of its maker's prowess in every seam. Of bicycling dresses, too, there was variety and to spare. A specially cut skirt, with knickerbockers attached, not separately, recommended itself as being effective, and hanging in particularly good folds. Though coming under the heading of divided skirts, its division was not noticeable in riding, both safety and appearance being thus well combined in shapely lines. A costume of this order made in a russet-brown cheviot, with collar and cuffs of white-face cloth, had an air that was of the most jaunty.

Louis Quinze, never more a vogue in all his career of digressions than in this present year of grace, was represented at Benjamin's by a smart black skirt and coat, with elaborate revers, and waistcoat of brocade. In claret-coloured cloth of the true Lafitte colour, and a waistcoat of blue satin, brocaded in small posies, with jabot and ruffles of Mechlin, an effect of some picturesqueness in this picturesque style would, I think, be arrived at. Buttons to be added, of course, of sufficient size and brilliancy, for never did those indispensable atoms attain so great an individuality as in the time of "Le Quinze."

Some copies of old buttons in enamel surrounded with brilliants lately reproduced by the Parisian Diamond Company more nearly attain the decorative spirit of that time than any I have seen out of the Musée Cluny, not to mention South Kensington. Shoe- and waist-buckles, too, of exquisite workmanship, diamond bows and sprays for the corsage, with dangling pearls adding gleam to lustre, lay temptingly around the company's shop in Burlington Arcadia. Here, above all, are the Orient pearls, perfection of imitative art, with which the most lovely or exalted dame may worthily adorn herself. In colour, shape, and that peculiar sheen which belongs to the real gem, these Orient pearls are absolute facsimiles of Nature's best efforts, or rather, accidents, as pearls, in the first place, really are. At a moderate cost, strings of lovely beads may be had, either mounted with rubies, brilliants, and other stones, or in collet and various devices, which, for artistic value and intrinsic beauty, excel all other inventions of the sort that have ever been set before the public.

Collectors of china, be it Limoges, Minton, Worcester, Copland, or what not, should with all speed betake themselves to Mortlock's, where, under new management, the accumulations of many years are now being sold off at prices quite phenomenally low. Sales, in their usual acceptance, are unknown in this century-old establishment at 18, Regent Street, Waterloo Place. Such an occasion as the present is not likely to recur, and, therefore, the *Hausfrau* or cabinet collector will be equally rejoiced at the opportunity it offers. Minton vases of exquisite colour and workmanship that have been twenty-five pounds are now offered at three guineas. English Majolica in divers shapes, from homely hot-water jug to gayest of flower-pots, are brought to the lowly level of two shillings each, many pieces having formerly figured at ten times that sum. Wine-glasses of superfine cutting and quality are shown in piled-up heaps for five shillings a-dozen; Copland dinner-services at a tenth of their value; Worcester breakfast-sets at the price of earthenware. If aristocratic Crown Derby could weep, it might now at its own monetary abasement, while quantities of other lovely and dainty sorts of porcelain are ruthlessly labelled a shilling, every piece of which is worth that sum ten times over. Finely cut finger-glasses, daintily painted strawberry-plates, are also offered at this price in such profusion that the Queen's shilling really goes up in the social scale considerably, seeing what beautiful things can be taken in exchange. In a word, of many occasions eagerly sought by the appreciative, I have never alighted on a more genuinely enticing sale than that now in progress at Mortlock's. No one should miss seeing what it offers.

SYBIL.

DRESS AT THE PLAY.

We have all grown to expect a good deal from piquant Miss Irene Vanbrugh in the way of smart clothes, and though in "The New Baby"—the latest Royalty production—she has an *ingénue* part, and her gowns are necessarily somewhat simple, she does not fail us, for they are also exceedingly smart.

The first is of pale rose-pink linen, with yellow satin ribbon at neck and waist, while a foam of pinked-out yellow glacé silk frills reveal themselves coquettishly with every movement of the plain, full skirt. Then there is a yoke of the grass-lawn, from which we can by no means escape wherever we may turn, though in this case it is made specially beautiful with a design of yellow, blue, and pink flowers embroidered in silk. Add elbow-sleeves, with a knot of yellow ribbon, as a finish, and this living picture is complete.

In the second act the dress is different. It is fashioned of white mohair, the skirt arranged in front in a broad box-pleat, and a similar pleat forming the front of the bodice, and being crossed by narrow white satin ribbons, fastened together by a quaint old ornament, where three turquoise bars are set in flashing paste. The bretelles are of the finest grass-lawn, the dark-blue ground patterned with a plaid design in paler blue, white, and yellow, and they eventually lose themselves beneath a deep ceinture of the brightest grass-green glacé silk, draped tightly round the waist.

—And still there remain to chronicle a neck-band and bow of white satin, and a quaintly shaped collar of guipure matching the lace, which gives a softening touch to sleeves—sleeves of which Miss Irene is justly proud, so exactly do they attain to the happy medium between two exaggerated styles.

Then, passing on to the Vaudeville and "A Night Out," we have Miss Fanny Ward, with a series of Maison Jay gowns which are a positive delight to feminine eyes, while they also seem to play a by no means unimportant part in the subjugation of Joseph Pinglet (otherwise

Mr. George Giddens). Imagine Miss Ward, first, for instance, in a positively adorable *matinée* of pale-blue accordion-pleated *crêpe de Chine*, held in to the figure by a wide waistband of blue satin, and provided with a great sailor-collar of real lace and softly shirred sleeves, their tightness broken by a cleverly draped puff at the shoulders. This luxurious loveliness is eventually exchanged for the *chic* simplicity of a morning-dress of pale-green cotton, the little bolero bodice relieved with collar and revers of white piqué, while a white leather belt encircles the waist and imprisons the soft fulness of the vest, which is all cloudy frills of white tulle, with vague suggestions of pink gleaming out here and there. Miss Ward's perfectly dressed hair is crowned by a coquettish little sailor-hat of green straw, the brim bound narrowly with black



[Copyright.]

MISS IRENE VANBRUGH IN "THE NEW BABY."

velvet, while airy rosettes of white tulle form a background for high quills of iridescent blue and green, and a cluster of pink roses and green leaves nestles against the hair at the back.

For the fatal visit to the Hotel Mascotte an evening-gown of black *peau de soie* is worn, veiled with net, which is one glittering mass of steel paillettes, the back alone, in its misty softness of accordion-pleated tulle, being free from the shining shower. The *décolletage* is cut in an arched form, which is wonderfully effective, and over the shoulders pass narrow bands of steel sequins, the sleeves themselves being of transparent net, frilled softly at the top, and then shirred tightly to the wrist. This costume—which, by the way, is sufficiently striking to impress itself even upon the usually unresponsive comprehensions of all the men who catch a glimpse of it—is completed by a black picture-hat with many plumes and a high white osprey, the band round the high crown being sewn thickly with steel sequins.

Last of all, Miss Ward wears a pink *crêpe de Chine* dress, made beautiful with *entre deux* and frills of mellow-tinted lace; while there is, moreover, a collar of yellow batiste, bordered with a foam of lace frills, the accompanying hat being of rose-pink straw, trimmed with pink tulle, and shaded roses nestling in their green foliage. Thus ends the tale of the fashions behind the footlights; but on the first night I noticed among the audience an exquisite dress of pale-blue silk, opening over a petticoat of white accordion-pleated chiffon, while the bodice was arranged with some jewelled lace, which fell in long scarves down the skirt. A necklet of magnificent square-cut emeralds set in diamonds was the only ornament, and the accompanying cape was of white satin, with a bold appliqué design in black satin, outlined with steel sequins, and with a lining and collar of ermine. The wearer was Miss May Yohé—or rather, Lady Francis Hope—who in the intervals between the acts chatted vivaciously with Mrs. Cecil Raleigh, who looked very handsome in a black satin dress glittering with green sequins.

Miss Alma Stanley also favoured black satin, with diamond and emerald ornaments, and a black aigrette in her hair rising from a diamond ornament. Another very striking dress was carried out in *eau-de-Nil* silk, with vivid touches of orange-coloured velvet for trimming, in conjunction with some lovely old lace; but, on the whole, black dresses were in the ascendant.

FLORENCE.

CITY NOTES.

The Next Settlement begins on May 11.

THE NITRATE OUTLOOK.

The market in nitrate-producing companies' shares shows distinct signs of becoming lively again, and it will probably get a further fillip when some of the reports, which are almost due now, come along. Several of the companies end their financial year in December, and it is their reports which are now awaited. Among them is the Lautaro, whose gross profits are expected to reach £100,000, which will enable it to pay a dividend of 15 per cent., or the same figure as the distribution for 1894. Another is the Santa Rita, but, although this company has probably earned quite as much as it did in the previous year, it is possible that the directors may deem it prudent to make some reduction in the dividend, so that perhaps only 7½ instead of 10 per cent. will be distributed. This, however, will only be a case of *reculer pour mieux sauter*. It is well known that the company has largely increased its machinery, so that, even under the arrangements of the Nitrate Combination, it ought to be able to nearly double its output in the current year. This will mean, probably, a considerably increased dividend, and, indeed, Santa Ritas, at their present quotation, look one of the most promising purchases in the nitrate market.

The Anglo-Chilian Nitrate and Railway Company ought also to have done very well last year. The traffic receipts of the railway have been particularly good, and, altogether, the earnings of the company should be very nearly, if not quite, equal to the excellent results of 1894. If these anticipations be realised, there will be a further 3½ per cent. for the shareholders, making, with the interim distribution, 7 per cent. for the year. Doubts are entertained as to whether the Paccha Company has done as well as in the previous twelve months. Still, it will be very hard lines if the shares do not receive something, and, at the present low figure, there would seem to be a rise left in them.

If the coming reports of these companies may be expected to be satisfactory on the whole, a statement of a rather different character is looked for from the Nitrate Railways Company. The secretary, writing last week, announced that the report had not then been drafted, but there can be no doubt that an adverse rumour concerning what was coming had circulated on the Stock Exchange and caused a sharp fall in the shares. There is seldom smoke without fire on the Exchange, and we believe that the anticipation of a poor statement will be fully realised. The fact is that the palmy days of the Nitrate Railways Company must be recognised as at an end. There are too many competitors in the nitrate traffic now for the old fat dividend-distributions to be made, and very shortly the company will have another and a particularly nasty rival in the Huara Railway. It is a significant fact that during the current year, though the shipments of nitrate from Chile have increased, the traffic receipts of the company have declined. Whether there is any truth in the report that the directors have agreed to lower the rates for freight, we cannot say at present; but it is probable that this is the case—indeed, in the face of such competition, it is difficult to see how they can be maintained, unless the company is to lose a large portion of its contracts. Facts and conjectures point to the conclusion that it is unwise to assume that the bottom of the fall in Nitrate Railway shares has been reached yet.

THE CYCLE SHARE MARKET.

The intense competition between the cycle companies of various kinds is leading to some curious complications. Of each company the obvious

and legitimate aim is to ensure, as far as possible, that it shall secure the right to use any patent which is essential for the production of an up-to-date cycle. The big companies are buying up the little ones worth buying; and we fear that, in some cases, patent-rights of comparatively small intrinsic value are converted into companies, with the intention of sale to some established undertaking.

But, apart from that, there is a great deal going on among the cycle companies which, of necessity, must be kept secret until the negotiations are consummated, and sometimes even then. For instance, there was a very great deal of a



MR. ARTHUR DU CROS.

Photo by Russell, Baker Street, W.

mysterious character in the speech of Mr. Harry J. Lawson at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Beeston Pneumatic Tyre Company last week. He began by announcing that, on the previous occasion, they had met to propose a small increase in the capital, and that the shareholders were to have a third of it; but what he had now

to tell the shareholders was that this was not to be. After the meeting, somebody came to the directors from the Pneumatic Tyre Company; and finally the Beeston Company's directors accepted an offer for the whole £20,000 of new ordinary shares, at a premium of £5000. For the Beeston shareholders it seems to have been a very good deal. But it is shrouded in mystery. Said Mr. Lawson: "The result was, after a long debate as to certain interests *which I cannot name*, but which are now going into the pneumatic tyre trade, and, having in view certain things *about which, also, I cannot tell you*, we weighed everything up, the *pros* and *cons*, and, in the end, made a bargain with the same syndicate as has bought the Pneumatic Tyre Company." And a very good bargain it was. We have referred to the shares on previous occasions in a favourable sense, and the course of the market has justified the views we expressed.

The great Pneumatic Tyre Company is really coming under the guidance of the magic name of Du Cros, which for so long has steered the Dunlop concern to prosperity. The public are sure to crowd over one another to get shares or debentures, and, when the details are made known, the company will, no doubt, prove more attractive than it appears to ordinary mortals in cold blood. The market "tip" is to buy the deferred shares, and sell the ordinary as soon as you have got them, which "tip," in our opinion, is likely to prove remunerative to those who take time by the forelock, and follow it.

In another part of this number will be found an interesting description of this colossal Dunlop concern, but, as the readers of our "City Notes" are more particularly interested in the personalities which pilot great industries to success, we give here the portraits of Mr. Harvey du Cros and of his son, Mr. Arthur du Cros. The former has long been well known as an athlete (he was twice heavy- and light-weight champion of Ireland), and it was he who took up Mr. Dunlop's invention, and formed a small company, with £25,000 capital, which eventually became the great concern that everyone is talking about. His son has ably assisted him in the general management.

We sincerely trust none of our readers have subscribed to the New Sociable Bicycle Company, which made its appearance during the week. We had heard stories that it was coming out, but did not think they were seriously meant, or we should have given a hint to those of our readers who are speculatively inclined to leave it alone. In our opinion, the concern will be, financially, a dismal failure, to be classed with the Boudard Gear Company and other much-puffed fads. If by any unfortunate accident some of our friends have applied for shares, the sooner they sell them, the better, we should imagine, it will be for their pockets. It is not a bad tip in the case of new cycle issues to see if Mr. Lacy Hillier is broker to the company, as, if so, the concern is pretty sure to be, if not successful, at least, in the running for success.

HIGHLAND RAILWAY

We are glad to find that the proposal to pay a year's salary as a gratuity to Mr. Dougall did not, as we feared it might, lead to any acrimonious discussion at the Highland Railway meeting. Such a result was averted by the frank statements of the directors that they had not been looking after affairs properly in the past, but were going to do better in future. It is satisfactory to learn that an examination of the accounts discloses "no financial unsoundness," but it is surely without a precedent in British railway annals to have a chairman explain, as the Earl of March is reported as explaining at this meeting, that—

... the directors last autumn decided that interest in future should only be paid out of money fairly earned, and was not to be taken from capital for the purpose of swelling the dividends. A system such as that was one of thoroughly unsound finance, and their object was to carry on the affairs of the company on principles that were safe and unassailable. Though the effect might be disheartening to them at the moment, he had a strong hope that they had reached the lowest point, and might look for a gradual and continued increase in their dividends in future.

The *naïveté* of the declaration that *in future* the directors would not pay dividends unless they were earned, and the solemnity of the rebuke administered to the board by itself, are delightful in their way.

JOHANNESBURG WATERWORKS.

The "waterworks" of Johannesburg have, no doubt, been in full operation during the past week, inasmuch as the feelings of the inhabitants have been played upon by the action of the judges in administering the law in connection with the sentences dealt out to the "Reform leaders." It is not to these "waterworks" we refer, however, but to the



MR. HARVEY DU CROS.

Photo by Lafayette, Dublin.

"Johannesburg Waterworks, Estate, and Exploration Company, Limited," of which the report of the annual meeting, held at Johannesburg on March 16, has just come to hand. Some interesting information regarding the progress of the company and its future prospects were given by the chairman, Mr. S. B. Joel. Like most South African undertakings, the Johannesburg Waterworks Company has made rapid progress during past years, while its prospects now are brighter than ever. The net profits in 1889 were £14,614; in 1890, £15,064; in 1891, £17,459; in 1892, £20,001; in 1893, £23,890; in 1894, £30,064; and in 1895, £40,368. The original debenture issue was for £60,000, and this is being quietly redeemed. Up to the end of 1895, £12,000 had been paid off, and the remaining £48,000 is being redeemed at the rate of £6000 per annum. In a town like Johannesburg, which is daily increasing in area and population, it is absolutely necessary that the company which provides the water-supply should look far into the future, and be prepared to maintain an adequate supply of that necessity of life. This point is having the close attention of the directors, and it is announced that the company has lately acquired a valuable water-right on the farm Weltevreden, about nine miles to the west of the town. The works in connection with the introduction of this additional water were in progress at the time of the meeting, and are now, no doubt, completed. This means an additional supply of some 2,000,000 gallons per day; and the position of the company will now be as follows: reservoir capacity, 322,626,000 gallons; yield of springs, 2,862,000 gallons per day; pumping power, 2,000,000 gallons per day. In order to keep ahead, if possible, of the increase in population, the directors are contemplating negotiations for continuing the pipe line to Steenkopjes, where there is a magnificent yield of from 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 gallons per day—one of the best water-supplies in the country.

The shares, as our readers well know, have always been favourites of ours, and the result of last year's working, and the future prospects of the concern, amply justify the confidence we have expressed in it as a first-rate progressive investment.

THE CHARTERED COMPANY'S POSITION.

For weeks the market in Chartered shares has been over-sold; so much so, that we have noticed it in these columns, and now the murder is out. It is clear that Mr. Cecil Rhodes, Mr. Beit, and Mr. Rutherford Harris are all implicated in the Transvaal raid, and it is even more clear that, if they resign (as appears necessary), there is nothing left, for what is Chartered without Cecil Rhodes and the long purse of the De Beers Company?

The revelations which the publication of the Reform Committee's telegrams have made common property are so far-reaching and so vastly important that we think few people have realised the extent to which, not only the future of South Africa, but the whole financial position of the wildest speculation since the days of the South Sea Bubble, is affected by the events of those few days at the end of last year, and the dash which Dr. Jameson and his men made for Johannesburg.

By degrees the world is beginning to recognise that the Transvaal raid makes other Chartered Companies impossible, has ruined the South African one, and goes very near proving to the world what many of us have suspected for some time, and we have had the audacity to express in these columns, that there is no payable gold in Matabeleland. The account is, as we have said, enormously over-sold, so much so that Chartered shares have been carried over this time in many cases without contango, and herein lies the only danger of selling. If we owned the shares, we confess that, without a moment's hesitation, we should get rid of them, for already a new issue of 500,000, at £2, is not only talked about, but being underwritten to pay for the war; and when, in addition to this, Cecil Rhodes must cease to direct its destinies, and the secret of Mr. Beit's big bear account in October and November last is public property, it is pretty self-evident that, whatever may be the momentary fluctuations, the value of Chartered shares as a dividend-earning machine is about zero for years to come.

There is an old saying that you should never trust "a wrong 'un," and ever since the payment of £1,000,000 in Chartered shares for the Rhodes-Rudd rights, to say nothing of the late juggle over the managing director's share of the profits in the Consolidated Goldfields, we have had sufficient—or what ought to have been sufficient—warning that the people at the head of affairs in Rhodesia were of this objectionable class; but now that we know the innermost workings of the Johannesburg revolution, and remember that the firm over which a director of the Chartered Company presides knew all about what was going on, and have made, it is said, £5,000,000 out of the slump, we confess we think it is high time that the public took the old story to heart, and let the "wrong 'uns" speculate with each other.

THE RAND.

We are sorry to say that our Johannesburg correspondent's letter has not reached us, but before he starts to work out the penal servitude sentence—which, by-the-by, we hope the executive will remit—he has promised to complete the series of interesting communications which we have lately been publishing.

THE "INVESTOR'S REVIEW."

The May number of the *Investor's Review* has reached us, and is a distinct improvement on the April issue. Of course, Canada comes under Mr. Wilson's lash, but the review of English railway accounts for 1895 is ably done, and worth to most investors more than the money charged for the whole number; while the article on Electric Lighting shares is useful, and contains valuable information as to the capital and prospects

of the various companies. We agree with Mr. Wilson as to the bright future in store for the best of these shares. Why space should be wasted on "Directorships held by Lord Salisbury's Government," and such rubbish as is comprised in the notes on "Leaders of the Directorial Host," we are at a loss to understand, except that, in Mr. Wilson's opinion, to be a director is in itself a crime of the deepest dye.

The critical index to new investments is not nearly as complete as it should be, but, so far as it goes, is both trenchant and true. This feature of the review might well be extended.

NEW ISSUE.

Menzies Golden Rhine, Limited, has been formed, with a capital of £130,000 in £1 shares, to acquire and work two gold-mining leases at Menzies, Western Australia, comprising an area of twenty-four acres, adjoining the well-known "Maori" Mine. With the exception of £3000, the directors have the option of paying the purchase-money of £105,000 entirely in shares, should they think fit to do so—which shows the confidence of the vendors in the venture. The remainder of the capital, £25,000, goes to provide working capital. The prospectus will be found in another column.

Saturday, May 2, 1896.

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Correspondents must observe the following rules—

- (1) All letters must be addressed to the City Editor, *The Sketch* Office, 193, Strand, and must reach the Office not later than Friday in each week for answer in the following issue.
- (2) Correspondents must send their name and address as a guarantee of good faith, and adopt a nom-de-guerre under which the desired answer may be published. Should no nom-de-guerre be used, the answer will appear under the initials of the inquirer.
- (3) Every effort will be made to obtain the information necessary to answer the various questions; but the proprietors of this paper will not be responsible for the accuracy or correctness of the reply, or for the financial result to correspondents who act upon any answer which may be given to their inquiries.
- (4) Every effort will be made to reply to correspondence in the issue of the paper following its receipt, but in cases where inquiries have to be made the answer will appear as soon as the necessary information is obtained.
- (5) All correspondents must understand that if gratuitous answers and advice are desired the replies can only be given through our columns. If an answer by medium of a private letter is asked for, a postal order for five shillings must be enclosed, together with a stamped and directed envelope to carry the reply.
- (6) Letters involving matters of law, such as shareholders' rights, or the possibility of recovering money invested in fraudulent or dishonest companies, should be accompanied by the fullest statement of the facts and copies of the documents necessary for forming an accurate opinion, and must contain a postal order for five shillings, to cover the charge for legal assistance in framing the answer.
- (7) No anonymous letters will receive attention, and we cannot allow the "Answers to Correspondents" to be made use of as an advertising medium. Questions involving elaborate investigations, disputed valuations, or intricate matters of account cannot be considered.
- (8) Under no circumstances can telegrams be sent to correspondents.

Unless correspondents observe these rules, their letters will receive no attention.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. G. W.—If you want to become owner of your own house or to save by small weekly instalments, we should advise the Birkbeck Society; but under no circumstances would we place our savings with the society you mention.

F. T.—The mill is shut down for some time, and, in the present state of the Transvaal, we should doubt the wisdom of investing in the shares, which are fully paid, we believe. The estate is large, and the ultimate future of the company may very likely be good, but you had far better spend your money in West Australian and General Association shares.

J. R.—(1) No. (2) No; very bad. (3) No, certainly not to be relied on, except when it is engaged in exposing the swindles of other people. This concern is, we hear, another name for the notorious Edward Beale. (4) Not a bad speculation. We should rather buy West Australian and General Association shares.

A. J. (New Zealand).—The concern you inquire about was only registered on Jan. 10 last, and no return is filed at Somerset House. The subscribed capital appears to be £125,000, and, from the names appearing in the contracts, we should say it was respectable.

S. R.—We replied fully to your inquiries on May 2.

ARGENTINE.—We should hold the bonds you name for better prices, also the Argentine Railways. Never mind the stories about Argentine and Chili; they are probably all rubbish.

R. W. B.—We wrote you fully on April 27 last. We are inclined to think Beeston Tyre shares even at present prices not a bad investment, the capital is so small.

H. M.—We wrote you fully on April 30, and see no reason to change our opinion.

ALPHA.—We consider the shares you name a bad investment. We never recommended them, as you will see if you read the notice again, and, when we wish our readers to invest, we promise you we will write something far stronger than the colourless notice we inserted in this case.

A. E. P.—We have returned your application-form and cheque, as we do not consider the company's shares worth applying for. If everybody would be as prudent as you are, there would be fewer sore hearts over bad investments.

CASCARA.—We believe Cassidy Hill to be a good mine, but we are not satisfied that the management is in good hands. The other two things mentioned in the *Gold Times* had better be left alone, especially the last-named.

A. H. R.—We fear you have dropped your money; we see no way of bringing Mr. Hughes to book except by voting against a liquidation. Consult a good company lawyer. Probably you have a personal claim against Mr. Hughes for dividend on shares till the end of the five years. If you want the papers back, send stamped directed envelope, and if the name and address of the proper solicitor to consult, comply with Rule 5.

A. J. E.—(1) We think so. Price about 2½. (2) Yes. (3) Fairly so. (4) We advise no dealings.

ANXIOUS.—We will let you know privately if we can get a buyer for your shares.

A. G.—Why send to the City Editor? How can we publish photos of dogs in the City columns? Is "Peter" a heaven-born financier? We have passed the whole thing on to the Editor.

EMBRANKMENT.—We should say, hold your Hotchkiss shares in the present state of the world, for the company is, we hear, like the other gun companies, doing a big business. Armstrong, Mitchell, and Co. are a good industrial investment, also, we think, Santa Fé and Reconquista bonds. Little Chathams also strike us as likely to show a profit. You are too late for the New Olympia shares.

C. A. P.—Read last week's notice of this company again, and, after reading, don't say we recommended it. See answer to "Alpha."